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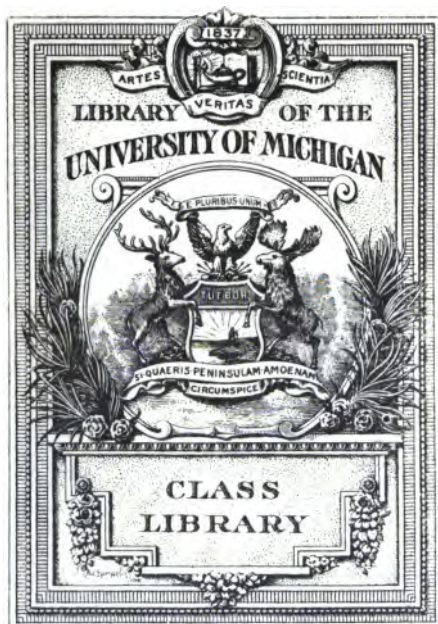
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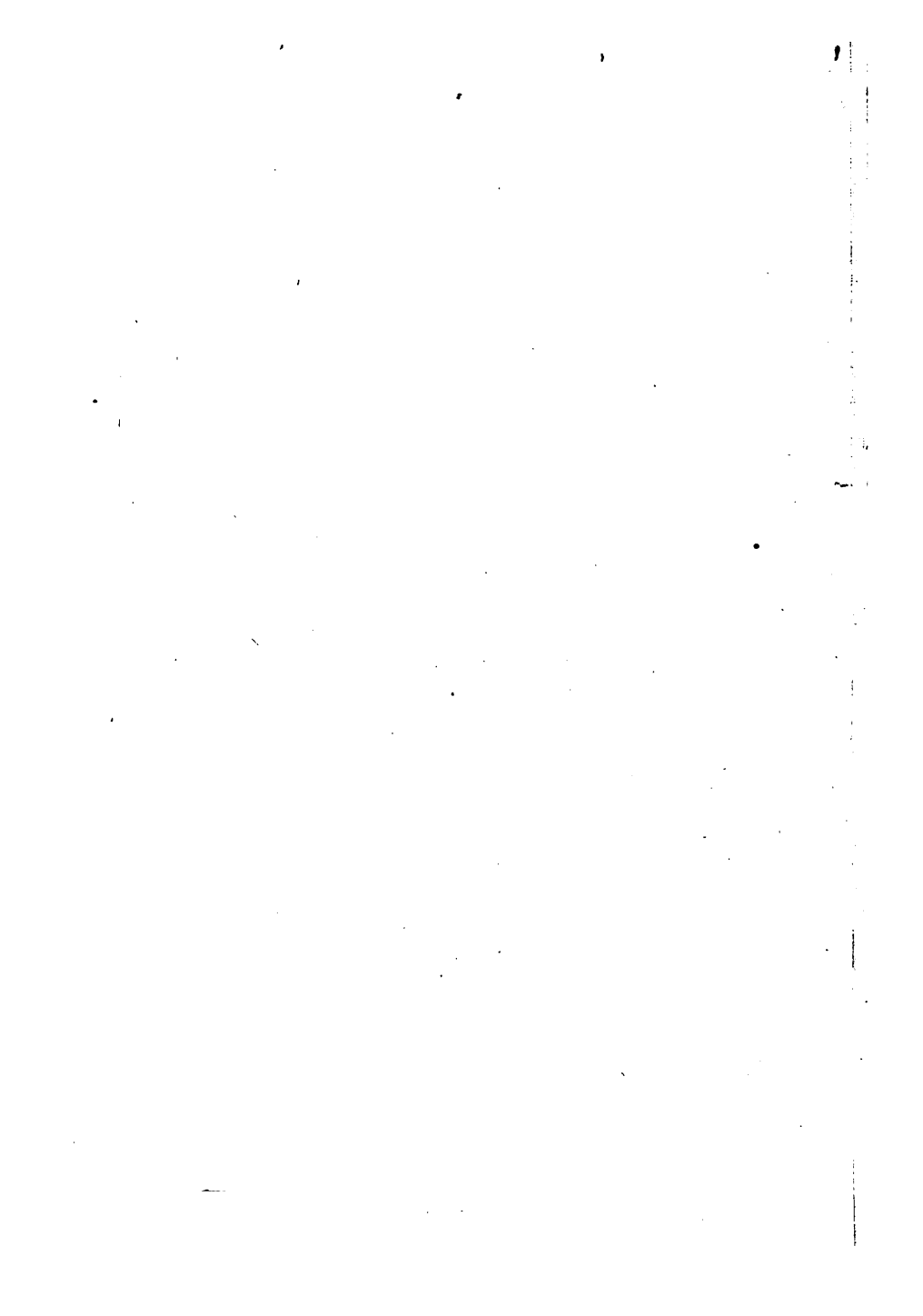


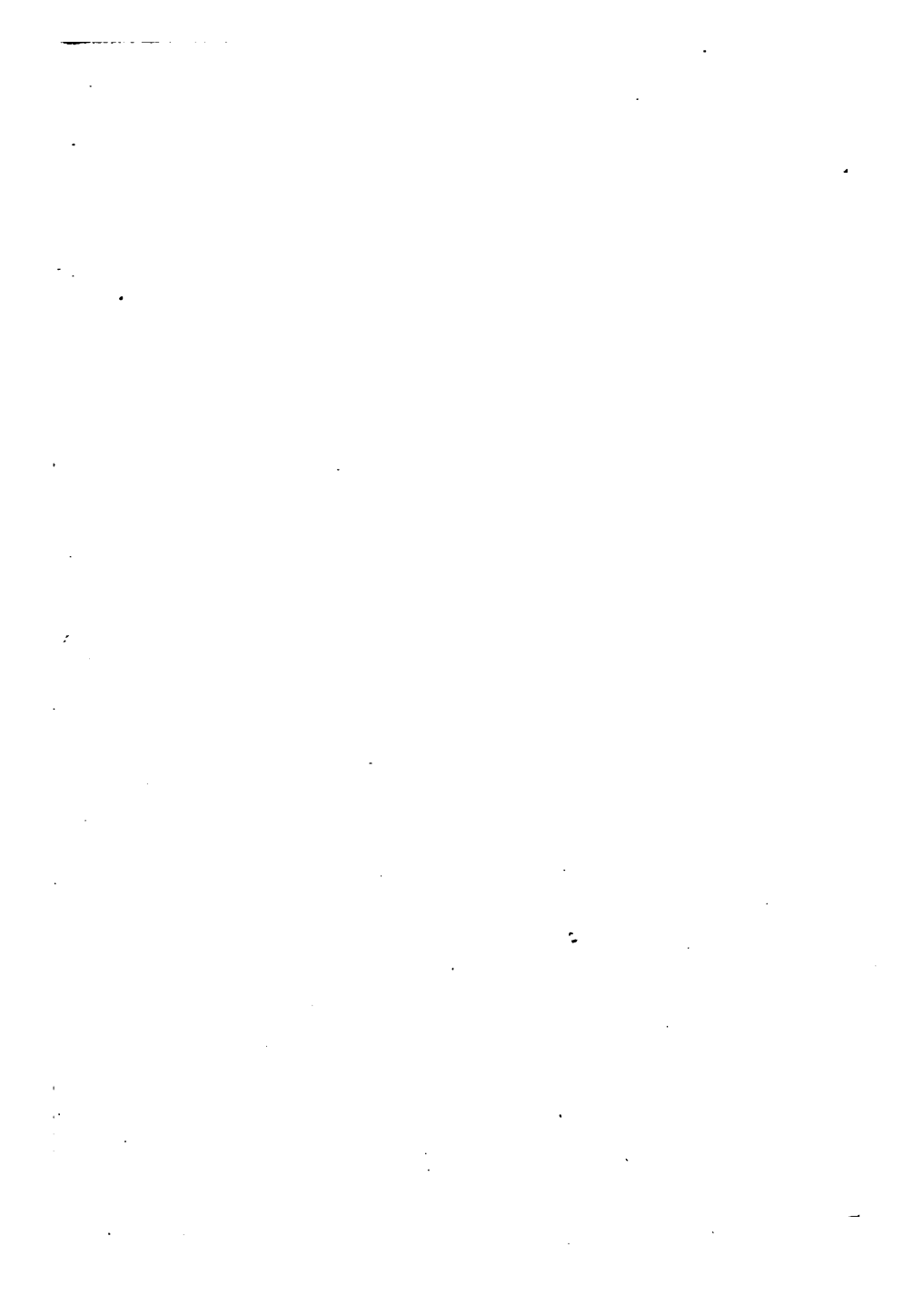
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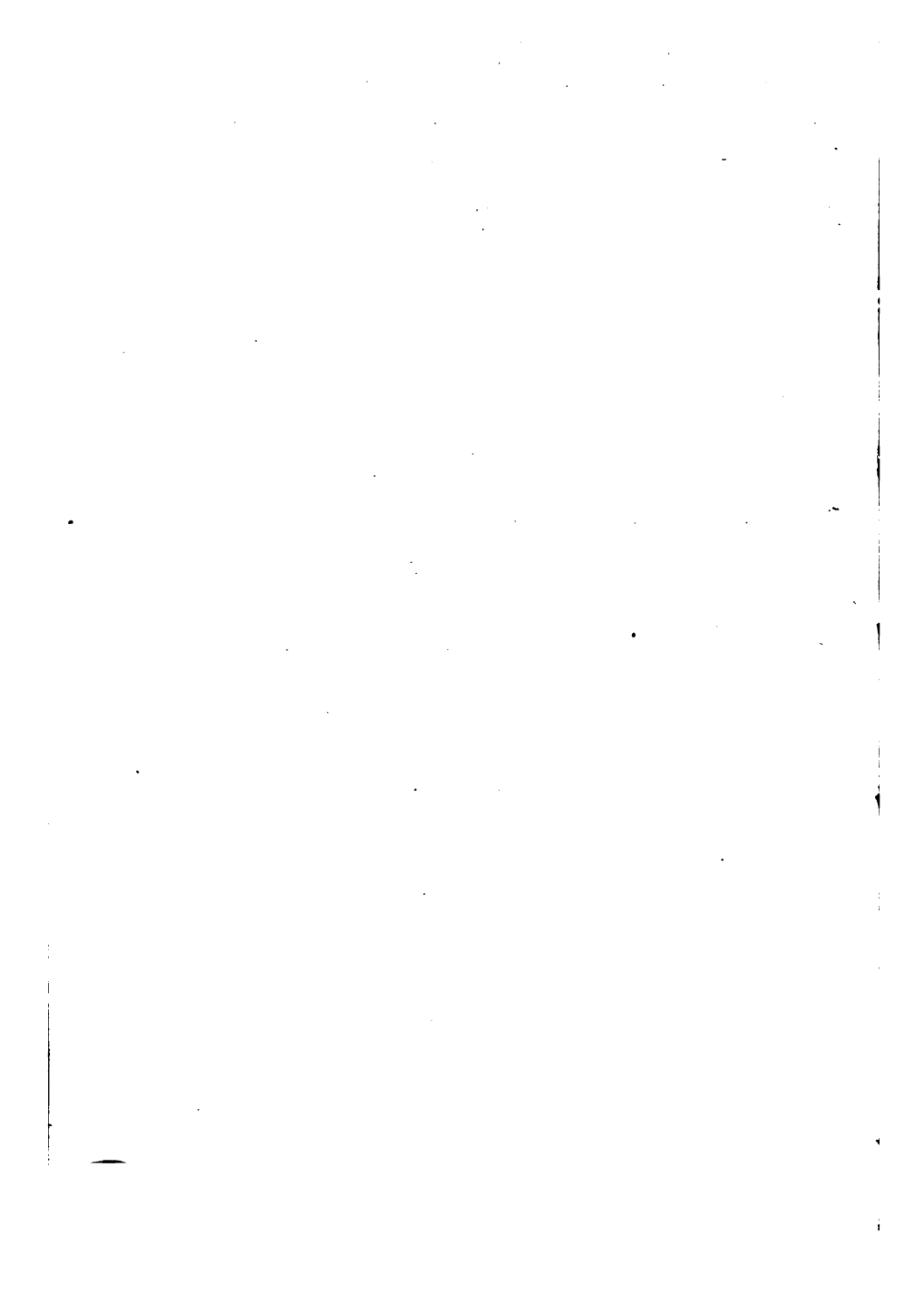
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A forest near Beirut

ASIA

A GEOGRAPHY READER



By ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON, *Assistant
Professor of Geography in Yale University,
with an introduction to the series by* RICHARD
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New York



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PREFACE

The purpose of this volume is to describe some of the ways in which the climate, topography, and other characteristics of Asia have influenced the distribution of man over that vast continent, and have caused the inhabitants of different regions to acquire highly varied habits and customs. To include, however, only those aspects of life in which the influence of physical environment is clearly apparent would be to present only a part of the story and to omit many interesting and important details which children ought to know about the people of Asia. Since the volume, in its character of a supplement to an ordinary textbook of general geography, is intended primarily to give children a picture of the life of the inhabitants of Asia, the author has deliberately included many details in which the causal relation between life and its geographic surroundings cannot easily be shown. The chief emphasis, however, has been given to habits and customs which show the causal relation, for the purpose of the book is to instruct as well as interest. It is hoped that the nature of the subject may stimulate many pupils to a further and more complete study of certain areas, at least, and that the scientific presentation of the matter may help them to realize that an understanding of certain of the fundamental geographic relationships enables one to organize mere scattered items of interesting information into systematic, usable knowledge.

The emphasis given to different regions of Asia is not always in proportion to the political or commercial importance of these regions to the rest of the world;

for the author's purpose has been not merely to describe certain areas, but rather to go into details in reference to a few regions so as to show clearly the causal relations between life and its surroundings which may there be illustrated. Each of these areas permits the study of certain large geographic principles and is a basis for comparison with similar or dissimilar areas in other parts of the world. Hence certain regions, such as Seistan in eastern Persia, have been described more in detail than would be warranted if the point of view were simply to show their importance to the world as a whole.

Another guiding principle has been that, other things being equal, emphasis should be given to the geographic conditions unfamiliar to the children of America, for it is unfortunate for pupils to gain the impression that all that is unfamiliar is unnatural, or merely curious and without meaning. For instance, the nomadic life of the Arabs, from this standpoint, deserves fuller description than the agricultural life of the peasants of Japan.

Another principle has been to avoid repetition, except to enforce a point. Thus Tibet is treated very briefly because similar conditions of nomadism induced by high, cold plateaus have been previously discussed in reference to the Tian Shan Plateau. In a similar way the treatment of Japan and India is fairly brief, because many of the principles which can be applied to those countries have already been developed in the preceding chapters on Chosen (Korea) and Indo-China.

The most important of all the principles which have played a part in determining the manner of the writing of this book is the conviction that ideas are the greatest of all human products. Therefore, the historic lands

of the Turkish Empire have been treated quite fully. The origin of Christianity and Judaism in Palestine and of Mohammedanism in the Turkish portion of Arabia, the rise of culture on the Ionic seaboard, the spread of letters from Phœnicia, and the existence of the earliest of the world's great kingdoms in Mesopotamia are facts of such import that every child ought to know the geography of these famous regions.

It has sometimes been said that geography is the handmaid of commerce. This is doubtless true, but the statement often creates a false impression. Geography is the handmaid of economics, history, politics, and other sciences as well as commerce. In this volume, accordingly, no attempt is made to follow the prevailing tendency and to lay special emphasis upon commercial geography. The attempt has been rather to proceed from a basis of physical geography and climatology and to build a well-balanced whole which centers around human activities. It includes something from each of the great branches—economic, commercial, political, and historical geography—but specializes in none of them. Doubtless the balance is imperfect, for no matter how nicely the scales may be adjusted the personal equation adds its weight, and the resultant presentation seems ill-balanced to all save the author. Fortunately, even though a book is not balanced to the entire satisfaction of all the world, it may still be useful. If this volume shall interest and stimulate the scholars who read it and broaden the vision of the teachers who teach it, its mission will be accomplished.

More than half the illustrations of the book are taken from the author's own photographs. Most of the others were furnished by the Secretaries of the American Board

of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in Boston, to whom most cordial thanks are due. A few were furnished by the Oriental Society of America, to whom also hearty thanks are tendered.

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INTRODUCTION

Many attempts have been made in the past to prepare supplementary geography readers that would enable teachers to increase the emphasis that can be given to the picturesque side of geography—that is, to add good, strong side lights to the necessarily brief and sometimes formal presentation of the more comprehensive textbooks. Such reading matter obviously ought to be as accurate, authoritative, and systematic as the material of a textbook, and must be presented in an appealing and readable form. Children of the age to get profit from such supplementary work are attracted by a volume that tells a story in an absorbing and enlightening way, just as they are by a story full of action. In either case, the book that causes the child to curl up in a corner and lose himself in his reading is the valuable book, provided its contents are sound, inspiring, and educative in the best sense. Children want to have faith in the realness and the value of what they read and to be able to relate the newly acquired material to the more familiar matter gained in formal study.

The editor and publishers have attempted to meet these demands in the series of supplementary volumes, of which this is the first to appear. Each author who is contributing to this series is a geographer of high repute, an authority on the country described, whose accounts are accepted as standard by the scientific world. Each writes from a fullness of knowledge of the facts depicted and with a keen appreciation of the way the people in each country reflect the influence

of the geographic surroundings in their habits and customs. The editor has secured the services of the several authors, has planned the larger features of treatment, and has edited the manuscripts from a common viewpoint so as to secure a certain uniformity of plan of presentation, but he has in no way sacrificed the individuality of the authors' work.

Thus the series will be a collection of expert treatises, written for a special purpose and from a common viewpoint. It will not be compilation of the work of others or a series of travelers' notes especially prepared to amuse. It will be a standard treatment of the world by regions, from the modern standpoint that geography is a study of the earth in its relation to man and life and that the most interesting topics in geography deal with the lives of peoples and the reasons for their habits, customs, industries, and distribution.

RICHARD ELWOOD DODGE.

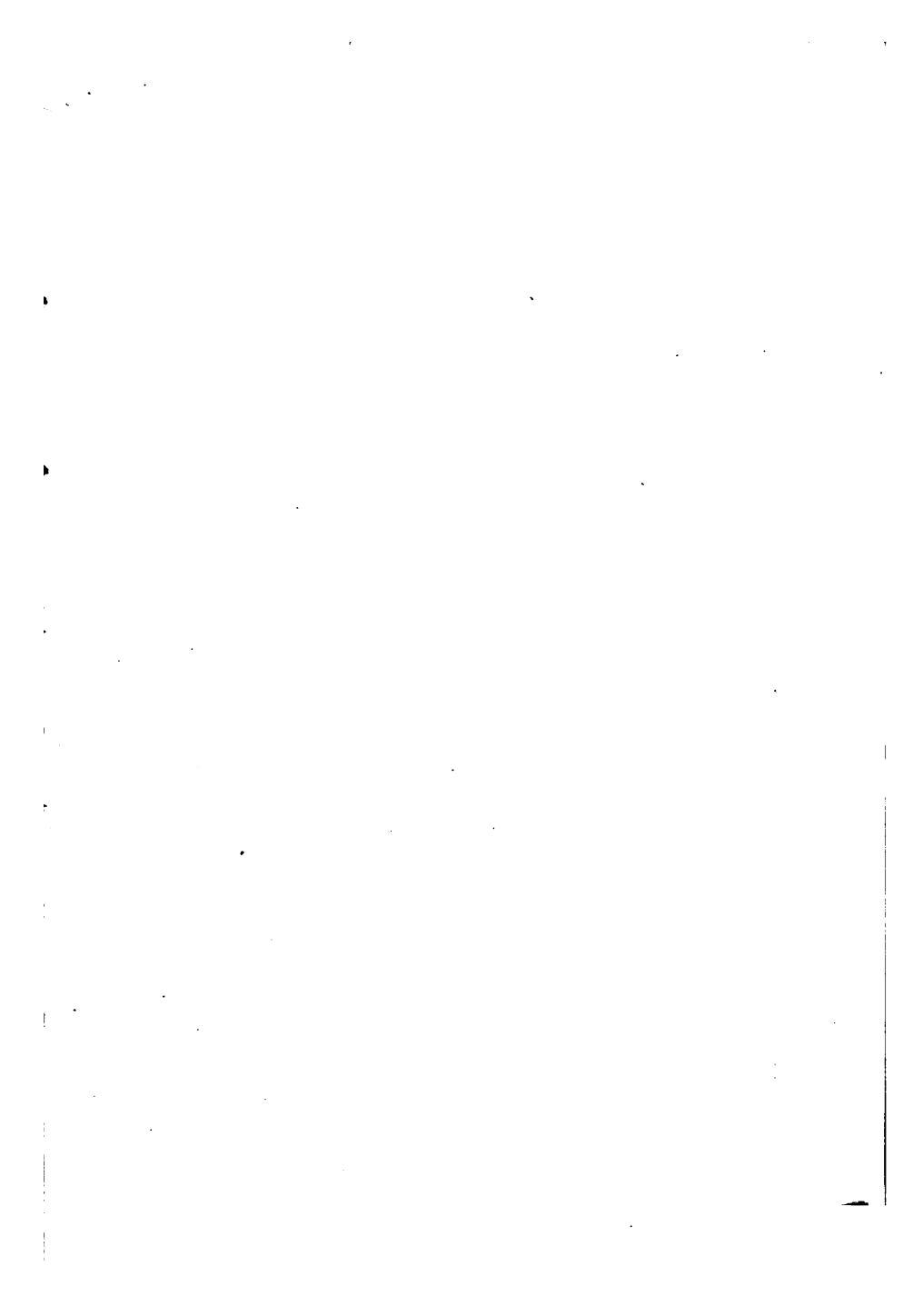
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— *Schoolboys and their teacher near the Irawadi River, Burma*

ASIA: A GEOGRAPHY READER

CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE

At a Khan in Asia Minor. As the first pink light of morning appeared in the east, the courtyard of the great inn at Eregli in central Asia Minor began to be filled with bustle and stir. On one side, under the veranda which ran around the entire square on a level with the second story, a wagoner in brown trousers, skin-tight below and baggy around the hips, was grooming his horses. Close beside him a small door was pushed open by another wagoner, leading two gray horses whose hoofs clattered loudly as they crossed the rough pavement to the well in the center of the courtyard. A third man was greasing the wheels of a rough freight wagon and singing in the high falsetto voice which the Turks seem to enjoy. The wagon was a springless vehicle, shaped like the old immigrant wagons of America. Its long, round top was made of white canvas gayly decorated with strips of red cloth sewed on the outside in patterns of flowers and leaves. Soon the "khanjee," that is, the keeper of the khan or inn, came down the stone stairs from the flagged veranda. Like most of his guests, he had been sleeping out of doors on the floor, with a thick quilt under him and a thinner one on top. It had taken him only a minute to dress, for he had not really undressed at all. He merely straightened the red fez or cap which he had worn all night, wound a pale blue handkerchief around it in the

form of a turban, put on his outer gown of dark brown cotton material reaching below the knees, and bound a



A Turkish araba or wagon

yellow girdle around his waist. Then he was ready for the first work of the day, which was to collect the money due from his guests.

The khanjee removed a large wooden bar and swung open the great doors leading to the street. Eight wagons were ready to start. The first was a passenger wagon, shaped like the freight wagons but fitted with springs and having a shiny black top. The curtains on the sides were tightly drawn, and the tones of the stifled voices proved that this was because some of the passengers were Mohammedan women, whose faces must not be seen by strange men. One by one the wagoners stopped to pay their bills, and then drove away in one direction or another. When the fifth wagon came up a quarrel broke out. The khanjee

wanted eighty cents; the wagoner claimed that the straw given him for his horses to eat was poor, and he owed only seventy cents. Both men began to shout in loud voices and seemed angry enough to murder each other. Finally the wagoner threw down his seventy cents and whipped his horses in an attempt to drive away, but the khanjee was too quick for him. Running to the door, the khanjee slammed it shut and locked it. The wagoner swore, but the innkeeper merely went off up stairs. The people in the other wagons protested, some trying to persuade the innkeeper that he had charged too much, and others telling the wagoner that he had made a mistake. After about fifteen minutes the two men allowed themselves to be persuaded. The wagoner paid five cents more, the khanjee opened the door, and the wagons began to drive out again. The odd thing about it was that, in spite of their swearing and cursing, the two who had quarreled said good-by to each other as if they were old friends.

Within half an hour after sunrise all but two or three wagons had departed. Every traveler wants to start early in Asia Minor, because in summer the days are extremely hot and sunny, while in winter they are too short to allow any time to be wasted. Some of the wagoners expected to drive steadily day after day for two weeks before reaching their destination. In Turkey railroads are still scarce, and in many parts of the country freight and passengers have to be carried in wagons.

A few hours later, in the middle of the morning, the dusty courtyard lay silent and deserted in the scorching heat of an unclouded July sun. The only people in sight were four men in the shade beneath the veranda. They were not sitting or standing, as we would do, but

were squatting on their heels in a posture suggesting frogs. A hubble-bubble pipe was being passed from mouth to mouth, so that each man in turn might draw two or three whiffs. It was like a large vase with two tubes projecting from it. On the top of one tube was a little hollow wherein to burn the tobacco. The other tube curved outward and served as a mouthpiece. In a hubble-bubble the smoke goes down through the water with which the vase is filled, and thus loses some of its nicotine poison before it reaches the smoker.

One of the squatting men took five or six short, quick puffs at the pipe, and then walked slowly across the courtyard toward a small door. His shoes were like slippers with the back turned down as one turns the back of a rubber in putting it on. As he walked they flapped so much that it seemed as if he must lose them. The man stopped at the door to fix his girdle of figured red cloth, extending from his waist nearly to his armpits. As he took it off, an American traveler, who was watching from the veranda, wondered how any man could wind such a piece of cloth around himself so smoothly, for it was more than ten feet long. The Turk, however, was not troubled. He was dressed in the common style of wagoners, and he knew how to put on his girdle. He simply fastened one end to the latch of the door, stood off far enough to extend the girdle to its full length, and then turned round and round. He wound himself into the girdle, instead of winding it around himself.

Meanwhile the "odabashi," or "chief of the rooms," emerged from the steamy atmosphere of the coffee-seller's shop beside the wide street door, and climbed the stone stairway to the flagged porch above. On his uplifted hand he bore a chiseled brass tray laden with

dishes. Stopping before a carved wooden door, he carefully pushed off his low shoes and left them standing neatly side by side, while in stockinged feet he stepped upon the rugs of the room. He did not think of knocking or of taking off his fez. These things are not considered necessary in the remoter parts of Turkey. But he would have thought it most rude to wear his shoes in the house.

Within the room a portly man in a long gown of pale blue broadcloth sat cross-legged on a divan, or couch, covered with rich rugs. The fez on his head was almost concealed by an enormous white turban. He held a crumpled paper upon which he was busily writing with a scratching pen. As the odabashi entered, he stopped writing and took from his green girdle a little brass case about eight inches long, opened one end, and selected one of several pieces of reed stems. This he carefully sharpened with a penknife. Then he tested it on his finger nail, and finally dipped it into a little inkwell. It was a pen of the kind commonly used in Turkey. The man wrote busily for two or three minutes, not using a table or moving the pen from left to right as we do, but holding the paper in his hand and writing in graceful strokes from right to left, just opposite to our method. He was a mullah, or Turkish priest, and was considered very learned because he could write so well.

While he wrote, the odabashi spread an embroidered cloth on the rugs in the middle of the floor, and set upon it a round table about three feet in diameter and eight inches high. Then he placed upon the table some sheets of bread about the thickness and shape of griddle cakes, but two or three times as large and somewhat stiffer. On these he laid some strong-smelling garlic, like green onions with thick stems. Next he set on one

side a blue bowl full of curdled sour milk, and on the other a plate of white, insipid mulberries, while he reserved the middle for a covered pewter dish full of "pilaf," which is merely rice cooked with bits of mutton in such a way that each grain of rice is distinct and yet soft. When all was ready the odabashi took a pewter basin in his left hand and a pitcher of the same material in his right, and stood before the mullah. The learned man stuffed his paper and pen into his girdle, pushed back his sleeves, and held out his hands. He did not wash his hands in the basin, for to him that would not have seemed clean. He merely let the odabashi pour the water over his hands so that only clean water might touch them and all the dirty water might be caught in the basin underneath. The odabashi had forgotten to bring a towel, so he offered the mullah the end of his girdle, which served quite as well.

When his hands were dry, the mullah sat down cross-legged on the floor, drew over his knees the part of the tablecloth that was not under the table, and began eating. He had no knife or fork or spoon. The people of Turkey have such things, but this man was old-fashioned. He had a habit of saying, "Our great prophet, Mohammed, ate with his fingers, and that way is good enough for me." So he carefully picked up some rice, rolled it deftly into a ball, and snapped it into his mouth. It was astonishing to see how very neatly he did it, without spilling or without soiling more than the ends of his fingers. When he wanted to eat the sour milk, he merely broke off a piece of the thin bread, bent it into a scoop, and used it instead of a spoon.

A Land Too Dry in Summer. The American traveler had been watching the mullah through the open door, but now the wagoner called to him that all was ready

for the day's journey, so he went down and took his place in a spring wagon. As he did so an old gray-



A village of mud and stone in Asia Minor

bearded soldier left the group with the hubble-bubble, picked up his gun from against the wall, and mounted a fine black horse. He had been sent by the government to escort the traveler as he drove out into the remote parts of the country.

Leaving the smiling host, the wagon and the horseman passed out through the great door and entered the bazaar, or the street where the shops are located. There peasants in dirty white drawers were haggling for half an hour over a difference of two or three cents in the price of tea or soap. Merchants in baggy blue trousers sat contentedly in little shops, selling cloth, raisins, peas, rice, and strange brown, spicy substances with lingering, indescribable odors. Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and other races mingled in the crowd, but among them all no one seemed in a hurry or to care whether he accomplished anything or not.

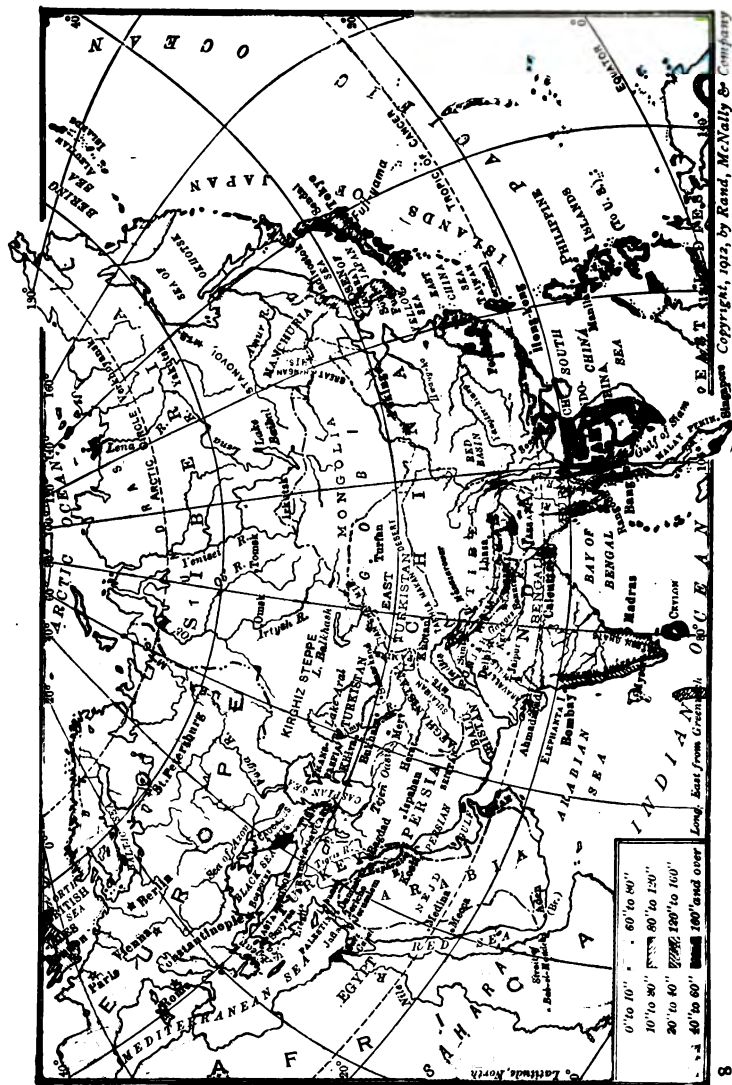
At first the wagon rattled over the rough limestone pavement of the city, between monotonous rows of

houses with mud walls broken by scarcely a window. Then the "gardens," as the Turks call them, began, but the dust rose from the unpaved roadway in such clouds that it was almost impossible to see them. Each side of the street was bordered by high mud walls which held in the dust.

As the wagon approached one of the many little doors in the walls, the soldier called out, "Let's stop here and have some fruit. This is my son's garden." Jumping from his horse, he pulled out a huge key about six inches long and opened the door. The air seemed cool and fresh inside, for there was plenty of shade and little streams of water ran in ditches beside long straight paths bordered with rows of stiff poplars.

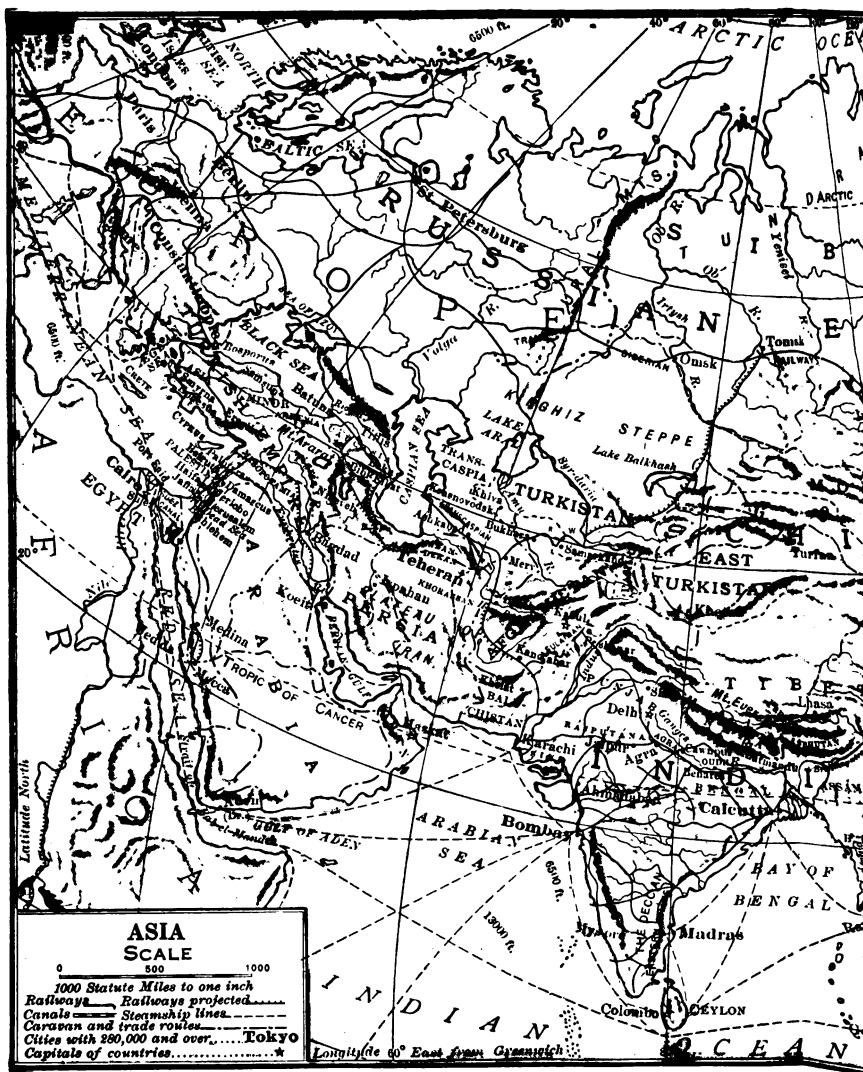
The soldier and his son led the way past an orchard of peach, apple, apricot, and plum trees to a pretty arbor covered with grape vines. In front of it a square pool furnished water, which the host sprinkled on the ground so that the evaporation might cool the air. A small boy ran off to an open field to search for an early melon. He came back with two. One was a yellow muskmelon and the other a watermelon with the green rind of the common kind, but with yellow flesh and brown seeds. The garden was full of vegetables and fruits, and the traveler was so pleased that he said if all Turkey were like this he should like to live there always.

When he rose to leave there was a great scurrying back of the arbor. The women of the household, with white sheets enveloping them from head to foot, had been peeking through the leaves to see the strange sight of a real foreigner in a hat and European clothes. Now they ran away for fear that he might see them, which would be quite improper, since this was a Mohammedan family.

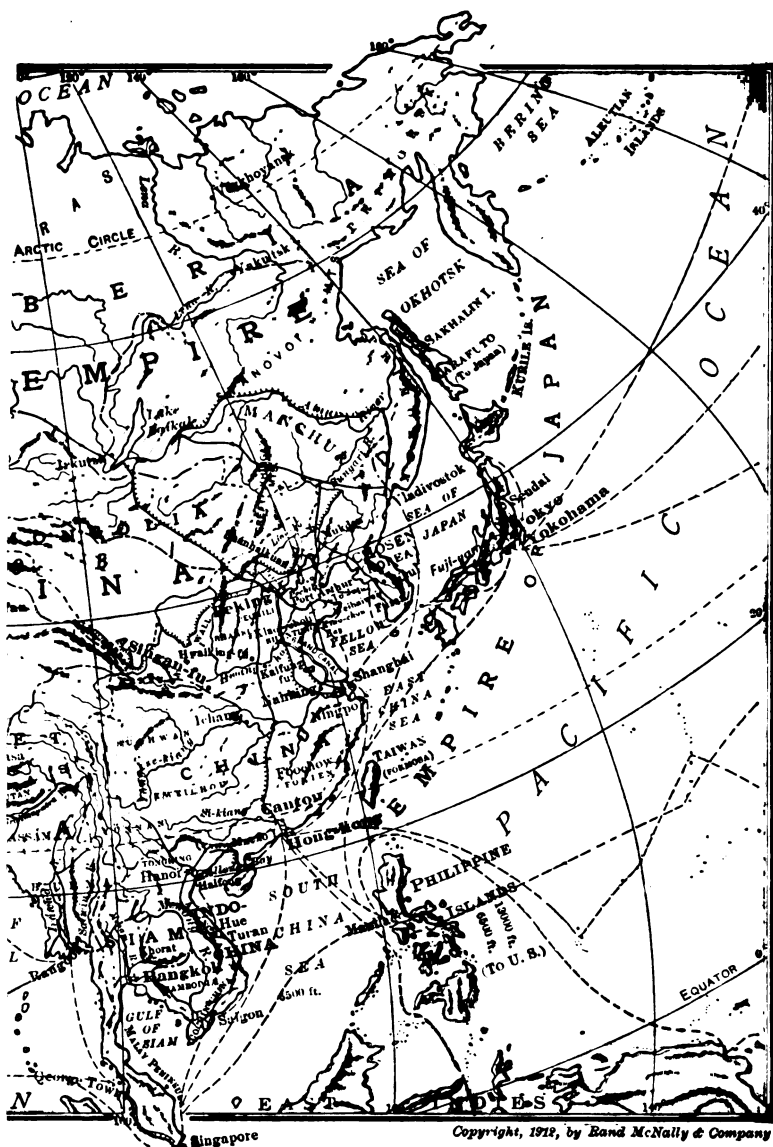


Mean annual rainfall

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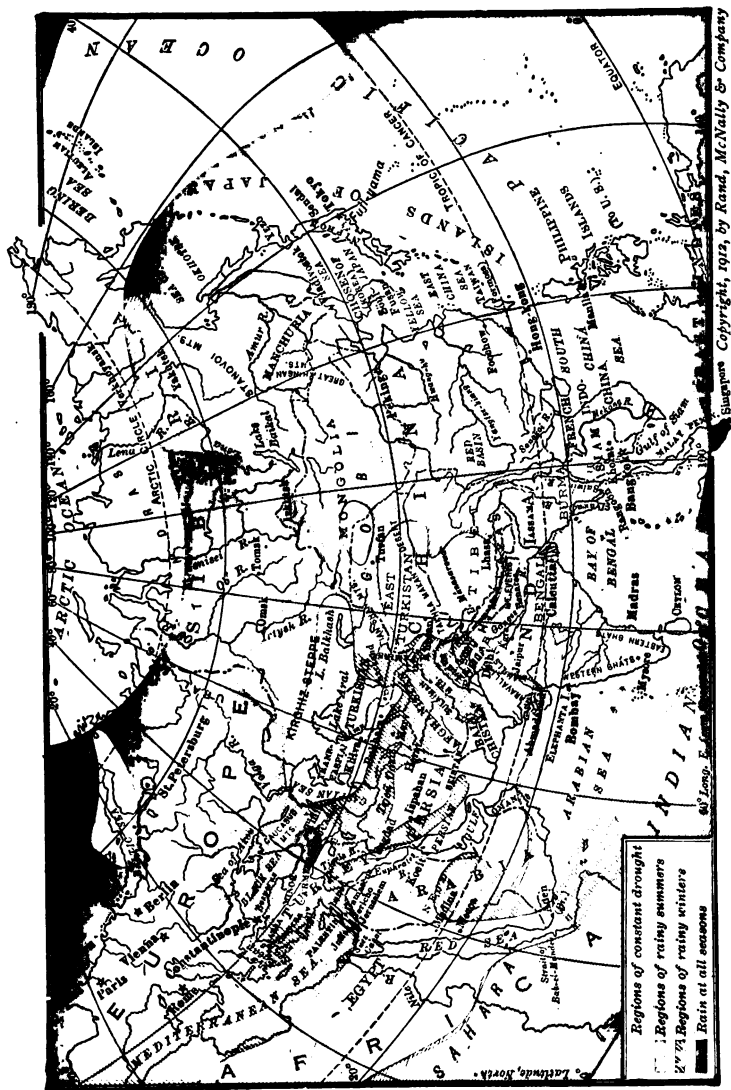


Political map of .



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of Asia



Seasonal distribution of rainfall

Leaving the pleasant garden, the traveler and the soldier rode on through other gardens and rich wheat fields for a while. After a few miles a great change occurred. They were riding away from the mountains in which the brooks have their source, and now they came to a place where the water of the brooks was all used up. Where so much water is used for irrigation the streams cannot flow far from their sources. So by and by the beds of the brooks are dry, there is no water for irrigation, and the land is left to depend entirely on rainfall. Unfortunately, no rain falls from May to September or October, and all the land becomes parched. This is one of the chief reasons why Turkey is so poor. For mile after mile the two men rode across a dreary plain, so dry and brown that most of it was uninhabited.

As they crossed the plain the soldier began to grumble about his wrongs. "What is the use of this constitutional government that we have now? I see no good in it. They tell us the country is growing better now that we have freedom. Perhaps it is for some people, but I don't like it at all. Yes, I get my pay a little more regularly than I used to, but I don't get any more, and besides that, the government wants everybody to know how to read and write and I can't see any use in that. Why should a young boy only eighteen years old get a good place just because he can read and has been to school? Such a boy does not know the roads and the people the way I do. And I don't see why they don't let us get our living in the old way. When I was younger we soldiers did not get our pay half the time, but when that happened we just went out to the villages to collect taxes, and we made the villagers give us more than our pay. Now they try to prevent us from doing that, and they say it is for the good of the country, but

I say that the old way was best, because then a soldier led an interesting life."

For three hours the traveler and the soldier talked about the old days of misgovernment in Turkey and the new days with the rulers trying to rule more justly, but continually hindered by those who want to return to the old ways. Mile by mile the plain grew drier and more barren, until the traveler wondered how any one could get a living from so poor a land. At last, about three o'clock, they came to some fields where the villagers were reaping wheat by bending over and grasping the stalks with the left hand while the right hand wielded the sickle. The weary harvesters kept standing up to straighten their backs, because the continual bending made them so tired. The village of one-story houses with flat roofs and thick mud walls lay half a mile away. Close to it, many people were busy threshing the grain on patches of bare earth, circular in shape and about thirty feet in diameter. These threshing floors had been made by picking out all the stones, smoothing off the earth, moistening it, and beating it hard and flat. Here the farmers spread the wheat as it came from the fields in sheaves, and threshed it. This was done by driving over it oxen drawing sledges of thick wood, like toboggans, with pieces of flint stuck into the boards on the lower side. The oxen were driven round and round in a little circle by boys or girls who sat in the sun on the sledges hour after hour. The flints, aided by the feet of the oxen and the weight of the sledges, broke up the stalks and husks of the wheat and set free the grain. Many poor men had no sledges. They simply drove the oxen round and round until their hoofs had broken up the straw.

When the process of threshing is finished the farmers

wait for a windy day, and then pick up the mingled chaff and grain on shovels and throw it into the air. The grain, being heavy, falls quickly, but the chaff is blown into a heap to leeward. On the great farms of our prairies the whole process of reaping, threshing, and winnowing is accomplished by a single machine. Thus the product of one man's labor in America is as great as that of twenty in Asia. The Turks have almost no machines, partly because their country is poor and partly because the people have never learned how to make inventions.

In the village itself not a soul could be seen. The soldier, however, knew the location of the guest room where strangers are regularly entertained, so thither the two men went. As it was only three o'clock in the afternoon, and as the temperature had risen to a hundred degrees, they both lay down for the "siesta," or afternoon sleep, which people commonly take soon after noon in hot countries. After about half an hour the drowsy thoughts of the American were interrupted by a plaintive little voice which seemed to be addressing some one who would not answer. "Won't you have some coffee?" it kept saying. After it had spoken two or three times, the traveler perceived a little boy about four years old, a rosy, begrimed youngster who stood timidly in the middle of the room, wondering how he dared waken the strangers. His mother had prepared coffee of the usual Turkish variety, full of grounds and as thick as pea soup. She could not properly bring it herself, yet the rules of hospitality made her feel uncomfortable unless it were brought. So she stood outside, peeking in, while the little boy talked. He would not be satisfied until he had watched the traveler drink one of the little cups down to the halfway line where the

official position. A gilt button in his cap showed that he was an educated man of some rank. Like almost



On a wheelbarrow, a common way of traveling in north China

everyone else, he wore a long queue hanging far down his back. Seeing the stranger, he stopped and spoke to him. "Does not the illustrious stranger who honors our humble village find the mud very bad today? God grant that

no more rain will come. Last year we prayed and prayed for rain all through the months of June and July, but none came until the middle of August, too late to raise any good crops. So now we are poor. Still we could live if the crops were good this year. They started finely. Just look out there and see all those splendid fields of rice, there where it looks like a lake full of grass."

As they looked across the green, watery plain they saw a man trundling a long wheelbarrow piled with goods. He was following one of the many narrow little dikes, or ridges of earth, which divide the country into thousands of little fields. They are built to retain the water for the rice crop, which needs constant irrigation, although too much moisture kills it. Once the man slipped off the dike into the muddy water among the bright green rice stalks. He did not get very dirty, for he was barefooted and his faded blue trousers were rolled to his hips, and he had taken off his outer gown.

"That is my servant," remarked the old man. "Just see how fine the rice fields look. I hope no more rain will come. Sometimes our river rises so suddenly that all the country is flooded. Our village stands a little higher than some, so that we are not afraid of being drowned, but all those villages over there are so low that in big floods they are under water. Ten years ago nearly half the people in that farthest village were drowned in a sudden flood. It is almost as bad for us, though. If the water spreads over the plain it will sweep across our rice fields, and perhaps cover them so deeply that the plants will all be destroyed. That is what we are afraid of now.

If more rain comes our rice will be spoiled, and we shall have a famine. We haven't any animals to kill and eat. Most of the villagers haven't enough food to last more than a month or two. Practically none of them has any money to buy food if



*Coolies in a treadmill pumping water
to irrigate rice fields*

the crops fail. We have had famines before, and I fear we shall have another. Let's not talk of this, however. Come into my house and see how good a son I have."

When they entered the house, the women did not run away as in Turkey, but merely stayed in the background. The old Chinese led the way into the best room, and pointed proudly with the long claw-like nail of his middle finger. He let his nails grow long because he wanted to show that he was a literary man of the old style, who did not work with his hands and therefore could keep his nails long. "Look there," he said, "could anything be finer? For years my son has worked night and day, so that his mother and I might be comfortable. Last New Year's Day he was able to buy what he had long planned. He brought us this beautiful present. Could anything be finer than those two coffins? See how white they are. We have put them in the best room, and we show them to everybody. Some of our old friends are envious, because they are afraid that their children will not give them so fine a funeral as our son will give us. They are right, too. Our son has always been a true worshiper of his ancestors, and when we die we know that he will spend every cent possible in having a great funeral, with a long procession, and much paper money, and a great feast. Don't you think we are fortunate?"

The traveler remained to dinner with the old Chinese official. The meal was not at all like that of the Turkish mullah. The guest and his host sat on chairs beside a table. They did not eat with their fingers, but with chopsticks. At least the Chinese used chopsticks most deftly, and his guest tried to imitate him. When the traveler spilled his food, because he was not skillful in

Chinese ways, the thoughtful host sent for a long silver fork with two tines placed about half an inch apart. The meal began with a sweet pastry, most cloying to the appetite. Then followed eight or ten courses, all of which were sweet and full of fat. For instance, the spinach was fried with sugar, and the pork, which had been kept till it almost fell to pieces, was roasted in such a way that it, too, was very sweet. As each new dish was brought on, the host, making a sound which suggested grunting to show how pleased he was, took a piece in his chopsticks and placed it in the little bowl of his guest. He kept doing this so often that the traveler could not eat half of what was set before him, and a servant had to take away the bowl and empty it. He always brought back the same little bowl and not a new one, for it would be considered unfortunate to use several dishes at one meal. Finally the dinner ended with a dish of unsweetened rice, a great relief after all the preceding sugary foods.

The Chinese, with their sweet food, their presents of coffins, their reverence for their parents, and their fondness for writing, represent one great type among the people of Asia. The inhabitants of Turkey, with their flopping shoes, their habit of eating with the fingers, their falsetto singing, and their fondness for noisy bargaining, represent another. The Chinese are continually kept in poverty by scanty crops and famines, and so too are the Turks. Oddly enough, too much water during the summer is the trouble in one case, and too little at the same season in the other. Both nations are also trying to develop a new kind of government modeled on those of Europe and America, and both are greatly hampered by the fact that many of the people do not want to change. That which has been done in the past

is good enough for them now, they say. In many ways the Chinese and the people of Turkey are alike; while in other ways, perhaps still more important, they are different.

A Land in the Far North. The countries in the northern and southern parts of the continent differ even more than do China and Turkey, because the conditions of life are still more diverse. Once an English explorer spent a whole year on the Arctic coast of Asia in the great dreary, swampy plains called the tundras. When he arrived, in midsummer, he found some grass and mosses covering the land but no sign of any crops. Not a tree could be seen in most places, although occasionally in warm, protected spots he found little willow trees a few feet high and tiny birches which creep along the ground. One day he began to dig a hole, but when he got down a little more than a foot he struck something that seemed like stone. Looking closer, he saw that it was merely frozen earth.

In this far northern region the ground is everywhere frozen to a depth of two or three hundred feet, and only the surface foot or two ever melts. The sun, to be sure, shines almost continually for many weeks, not going below the horizon at all in June and only for a few minutes for several weeks before and after that time. It is so low in the sky, however, that it gives very little heat. Even in the short two months which can be called summer the explorer experienced two or three cold storms with snow and sleet.

So long as the weather made it possible, the explorer traveled from one native encampment to another. The encampments were often fifty miles apart, for the tundras cannot support many people. The natives were all nomads or wanderers, compelled to wander from

place to place to find food for themselves or their animals. Some were at the mouths of the rivers, catching fish and sea birds, while others were trapping hares, foxes, and other animals whose fur could be used for clothing. The majority, however, were busy taking care of reindeer. These animals thrive on the moss and grasses of the tundras, although our horses and cows would soon die on such poor food. If it were not for the reindeer there would probably be no human inhabitants in this bleak region. The animals are used not only to draw sledges but to furnish milk. Sometimes the flesh is eaten, but in general the reindeer are too valuable to be killed for food.

In September the natives began to move a little southward to find better pasture for their herds. The explorer and three or four Buriats remained near the coast. Already snow had fallen, and they used it to bank up the sides of a low hut made of reindeer skins. On the twentieth of September a fierce storm raged and the temperature fell to fifteen degrees below zero. That was the real beginning of winter, which continued for eight long, weary months. Once, indeed, the thermometer registered ninety degrees below zero, and a temperature of forty or fifty degrees below zero was common. Men and animals became covered with frost from their own breath. Birds on the wing sometimes fell to the ground frozen to death, and the ice on the ponds cracked again and again as it contracted from the cold. Fierce blizzards often raged, and while they lasted man and beast remained buried beneath the snow, as the only way to keep from freezing. The sky was almost always covered with dull clouds. The long night of a month or two, when the sun was always below the horizon, was lighted only at intervals by the magnificent northern lights.

A Land in the Far South. When the explorer returned from the Arctic tundras he spent a year in the tropical



Indian peasants and oxen

plains of northern India along the Indus River. These plains and the tundras are equally flat. They have about the same amount of rain, and they lie at the same height above the sea. In almost every other respect, however, they are different. One of the things that most impressed the traveler was that, in spite of a similar amount of rain, the Indus Plain seemed very dry, while the tundras had been very wet. It was merely because the sun in India rides so high in the sky that it makes the land very warm and evaporates the rain with great rapidity.

The first day that the traveler went to walk the thermometer stood at a hundred degrees in the shade, as it had for many days before. When he put his hand on

the ground it almost burned him. Naturally he did not walk far, for fear of sunstroke. The natives had no fear of that, however, and were working in their fields and gardens quite comfortably. They were slender, dark brown people, dressed in thin, scanty garments of cotton, not fitting like ours, but wound loosely around the body. Their appearance was quite different from that of the plump, round-faced inhabitants of the tundras. Fat people do not seem to thrive in the tropics, nor lean ones in the Far North. When occasional cool, rainy days came during the winter, the traveler noticed that, even though the temperature fell only to forty-five or fifty degrees above zero, the poor Indians shook and shivered far more than the tundra people did when it fell equally far below zero.

It seemed as if the people of the Indus Plain ought to be much richer, more comfortable, and more cheerful than those of the tundras, but that was not the case. They appeared to be planting crops all the time, especially in winter, and in many places the farmers raised four or five crops from the same land each year. Yet they were no more comfortable than the tundra people, who can raise no crops at all. When the traveler asked why the people were not richer and more cheerful, a dark-skinned farmer, naked to the waist, replied: "Don't you see that more than half the land is not irrigated, so we cannot use it? And some years there is too little water for the land that we use, and famines come." Because such abundant crops can be raised in good years, the people of India have not learned to work very hard, nor to provide for the bad years which are sure to come. As they are not obliged to wander around in search of food for their animals, they are apt to stay in one region all their lives. Therefore they are afraid to visit strange

places, and are suspicious of strange people from whom they might learn new ways. Moreover, the heat makes them lazy. So, for generation after generation, they live in their little mud villages, wear their thin clothes, shiver when a northerner would call the weather warm, and fear each year that hard times will come. If the people of India were forced to live in the tundras most of them would speedily die, and the few who lived would be compelled to adopt a wholly new mode of life.



Inhabitants of the high, cold plateaus of central Asia

A Land at a Great Altitude. Distance north or south of the equator is not the only thing that makes a country hot or cold. Height above the sea has the same effect. The western part of the great plateau of Tibet lies from 13,000 to 15,000 feet above the sea. Here snow falls from September to May; frosts occur even in summer. No one can procure a living here in the winter, but during the summer nomads bring their sheep and

yaks to pasture on the rich grass. The people live in low, black tents which are abominably smoky and uncomfortable, because fires are necessary for warmth and no way is provided for the smoke to escape. Everyone dresses warmly. Men, women, and children wear long gowns made either of sheepskins with wool inside or of two layers of cloth with cotton between them, like a quilt. Such thick winter clothes are necessary all the year around except at midday in summer, when the sun is high in the sky.

A Land at a Low Altitude. The valley of the Jordan River in Palestine lies at the same distance from the equator as does Tibet. Instead of being a cold, high plateau it is a deep hollow extending to 1,300 feet below sea level in the region of the Dead Sea. Therefore its climate is very different from that of Tibet. In the Jordan Valley no snow falls even in winter, and the air is almost unendurably hot in summer. People do not like to travel by day, but wait for the cool of the night. The crops are planted in winter and reaped in April, long before the nomads of Tibet go to their summer camps in the high part of the plateau. In a hot place like the Jordan Valley it is at first surprising to meet Arabs with their heads bundled up in thick cloths like shawls, even in midsummer. One soon finds, however, that it is very sensible to wrap up one's head, for the sun is so hot that it is necessary to protect the head by means of a thick covering. All these interesting differences between Tibet and Palestine are due to the difference in the elevation, and hence in the temperature, of the two places.

Customs and Geographic Conditions. The more we study Asia the more we see how closely the habits and character of the people are connected with the physical

conditions which surround them. The people of one part of the continent differ from those of another as much as Englishmen differ from Zulus. All alike, however, are obliged to do many things in particular ways because of the lands which they inhabit. Other differences have sprung up because certain methods were adopted in special places and have never spread elsewhere, since communication is difficult. In reading about strange customs we must remember that the fact that they are strange to us does not mean they are not as good as our own. Some are doubtless worse than ours, many are equally good, and some are better. For instance, in readiness to learn from others the Japanese far surpass us; while in patient economy and industry the Chinese are so far our superiors that we have as much to learn from them in those respects as they have to learn from us in other ways. All these things are a part of the geography of Asia, and we cannot understand them without a knowledge of the countries which the various races inhabit.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUR GREAT DIVISIONS OF ASIA

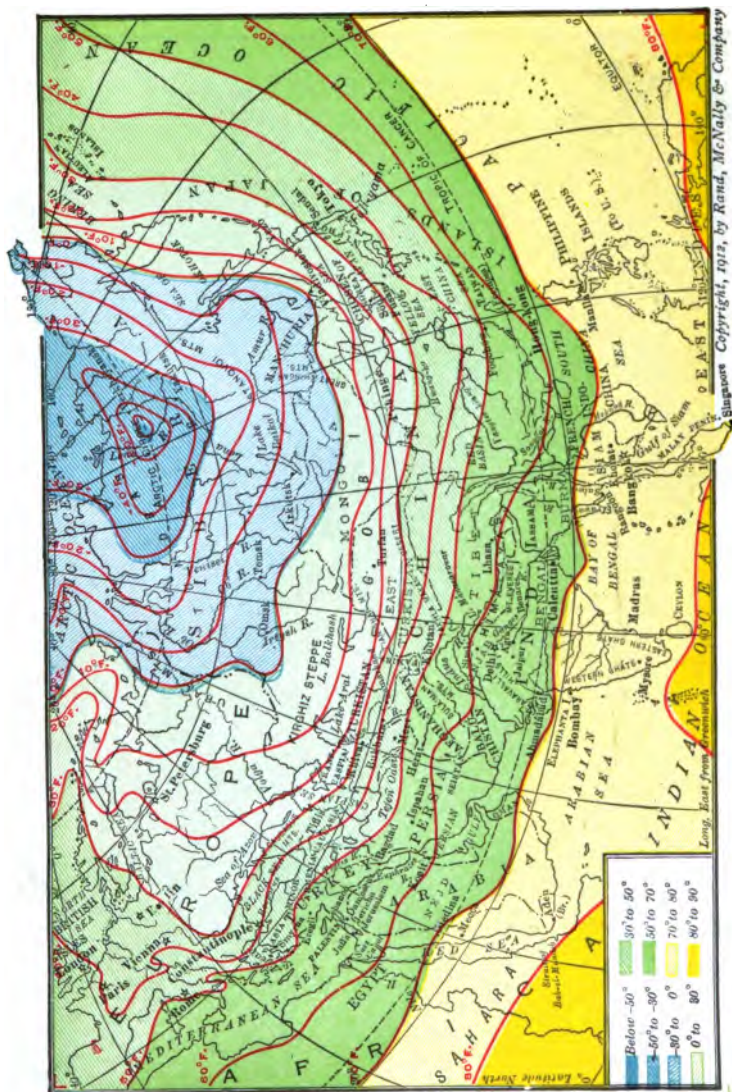
How Customs Differ. One day a new boy came to a school in Maine, in the United States. When the teacher asked his name and where he came from and what he had studied, the other pupils laughed at his replies. He said "hälf" instead of "half," as they did, and sounded his r's very clearly, especially at the ends of words like "far." As he wrote his name one of the girls looked over his shoulder and said to herself, "My! How much rounder his writing is than ours." At recess some one began to count out for tag. The new boy listened a minute, and then said, "What a funny way of counting out; we always do it like this," and he recited a wholly different rhyme. The next day he taught the others a new kind of tag and a new way of playing horse. It was called "Broncho Buster." The horses got down on their hands and knees. Then, when somebody said, "Ready," the other boys jumped on the horses' backs, and the horses tried to "buck" them off by jumping up and down and kicking up their legs, or throwing up their heads. The other children had never seen horses act in that way. The new boy was the only one who had ever ridden horseback. That seemed very funny to him. "Why," he said, "out in Colorado, where I lived before I came to stay with Grandma, everybody could ride a horse."

After a month or two the new boy had learned to do things as the other children did, and they had learned something from him. His ways were not any worse than theirs, nor any better. They were merely different,

because he had lived all his life on a ranch in Colorado, while the others had always lived in a town in Maine.

The Separation of Nations. Nations are like children. If they are separated from one another and live in different kinds of places, they learn to do things in different ways. They may be very unlike, as in the case of the people of the tundras and of northern India, who live far apart and in very different kinds of places. Or they may be only a little different, like the English and Americans, who have much communication with each other and live in almost the same kind of country.

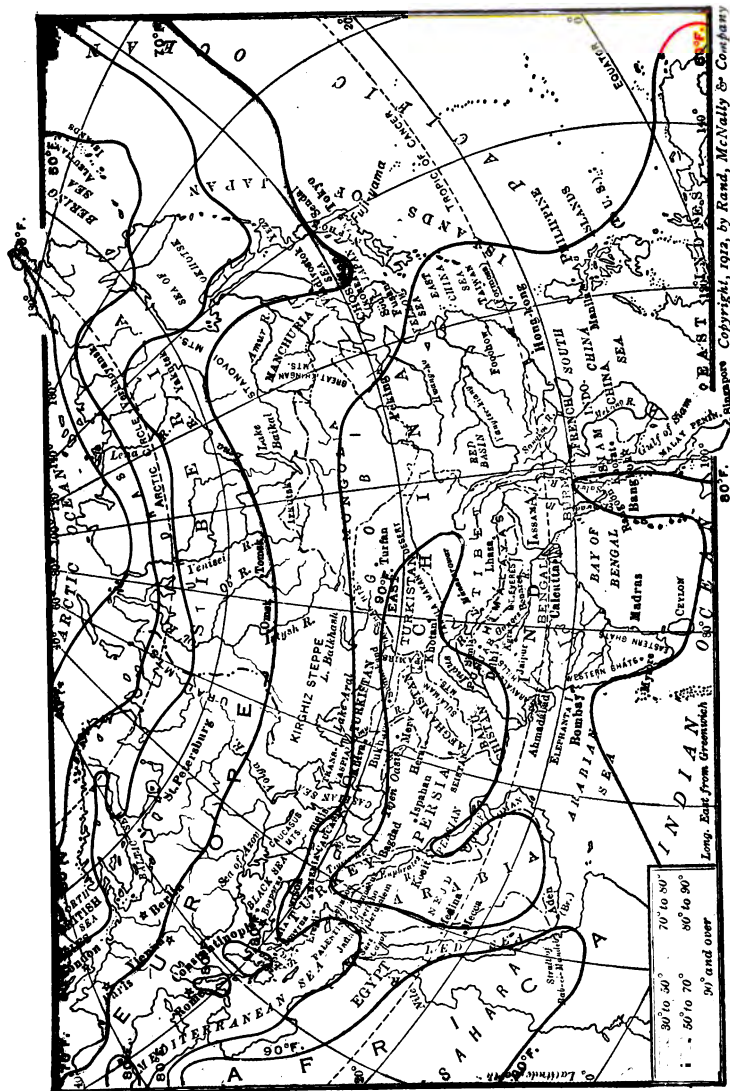
Nations are separated chiefly by the ocean, by mountains, and by deserts. In Asia the mountains are so high that they have been the great separators. In going from India to western China a traveler was about to cross a pass 17,000 feet high over the Kuenlun Mountains. The nomadic Kirghiz he met in the high valleys on the southern side of the range said to him, "Your horses and mules cannot carry their loads over the pass. It is too high and steep. You must use yaks, which are used to such places." He took their advice. The yaks zigzagged easily up the long steep mountain side, never slipping among the loose rocks or becoming frightened, and rarely stopping to rest. The horses and mules slipped and sometimes fell; and every few minutes stopped, panting, to rest. One mule became so tired and had such difficulty in breathing the thin air that it lay down to die. No urging could make it move. It lay there for hours, and finally the man who was left with it was obliged to shoot it that it might not die a harder death by starvation. At the top of the pass the caravan was compelled to wait while steps were cut in the ice which covered the crest of the mountain. Even with the aid of the steps the crossing was dangerous.





Longitude East from Greenwich

Physical ma



One horse slipped and was killed by a fall of a thousand feet.

Difficulties of this sort keep the people on opposite sides of mountains apart, so that they do not have much trade with one another and do not learn one another's habits. The barrier of the Himálaya and Kuenlun ranges is one of the chief reasons why India and China are so different.

On a physical map of Asia we see in the center a region where a great many mountain ranges come together in a sort of knot. The knot is called the Pamirs, or the "roof of the world." It is a great plateau or barren area of rolling hills and gravelly plains about 12,000 feet above the sea. Above it snow-covered mountains rise to altitudes of from 15,000 to 25,000 feet. Even in summer the plateau is so cold that no one can live there except a few wandering shepherds, like those of Tibet.

The main mountain ranges which join at the Pamirs form a gigantic cross or flat $\times$. Between the very unequal arms of this cross there are four spaces which form the four chief divisions of Asia. Their names are Southwestern Asia, Northern Asia, Eastern Asia, and Southern Asia. If we compare the political divisions of Asia with these four natural or physical divisions of the continent, it appears that each of the four physical divisions contains one or more countries or political divisions. The boundaries of the countries are very close to the great mountain ranges.

Long ago one set of people went to one division, and one to another. They found different kinds of climate and soil and mountains, and they also found different kinds of plants and animals. So they learned to live in different ways, just as the people of the tundras

have learned to live in ways different from those of India. If there had been no mountains it would have been easier for the people to go from one division to another. They would have learned from one another, just as the pupils in Maine learned a new game from the boy who came from Colorado. Because the mountains were hard to cross, the people mixed only a little with one another, and each division now has its own special character.

Southwestern Asia. The first of the great divisions includes the countries of Arabia, Turkey, Caucasia, Persia, Afghanistan, and Balúchistán. It contains many mountains and plateaus, and many basins, or plains with a rim of mountains about them. The middle of each basin is usually occupied by a salt lake or swamp. In addition to the plains in the basins of Persia and Asia Minor, Southwestern Asia contains the huge desert plain of central Arabia and the river plain of Mesopotamia.

The most unfavorable condition in Southwestern Asia is the dryness of the country. In general all the rainfall or snowfall comes in winter, and no rain falls from May to October. Many parts of Arabia and Persia have rain only three or four times in the year. In such a region there cannot be many large rivers. The four largest are the Euphrates, Tigris, Aras, and Kizil-Irmak. They all rise in the Armenian Plateau, where the mountains are high, so that the rainfall is heavier than elsewhere. Many of the rivers shown on maps of Southwestern Asia are dry part of the year.

Southwestern Asia is so dry that the people are forced to bring water to the fields by means of irrigating canals and ditches. During the rainless summer the scanty grass which clothes the ground in spring dries up. The

fields of wheat and corn and vegetables would do likewise if the inhabitants did not lead the water of the



Irrigating ditches in eastern Persia

rivers and brooks to them. As the traveler rides along in summer over a dusty brown plain, such as that near Eregli in Asia Minor, he comes upon a ditch full of muddy water. A little dam of mud shoveled up out of the bottom of the ditch turns the water into a field of grain. There it spreads out and soaks into the dry earth, until the whole field is turned into mud. The roots of the plants suck up the water greedily, and when one field has been well soaked the water is turned to another. In this way all the farms around a village are watered from a single brook, and the crops grow as well as if rain had fallen. If the streams should run dry, the crops would die and the people would suffer from famine.

The people of Southwestern Asia are chiefly farmers and herdsmen. Many of the herdsmen are nomads who live in tents all the year, and travel from place to place in the mountains or in the desert, driving their flocks about to localities where grass can be found. Most of the people are Mohammedans. They believe that Mohammed, the founder of their religion, was the greatest of all prophets. They are governed by despotic Mohammedan rulers; but little by little the people are beginning to desire to rule themselves, as we do in America.

Northern Asia. On the map of Asia it can be seen plainly that one arm of the mountains which divide the continent into four parts forms a great range running westward from the Pamirs to the Caucasus. Another arm consists of a series of plateaus extending northeastward to the Sea of Okhotsk. North of these two arms lies Northern Asia—the second great division of the continent. The plateaus of the arm running to the Sea of Okhotsk are separated by lowlands through which it is easy to pass. So the people on the two sides have gone back and forth a good deal. This is one of the reasons why Russia has had many quarrels with China and Japan.

Northern Asia consists largely of plains with some plateaus and low mountains far to the northeast. It contains Siberia and Russian Turkistan. All of it is governed by Russia. The various parts of the great plains differ from one another chiefly in climate. Transcaspia, the southern portion of the plains, is so dry in summer that the whole region is a desert. The only exceptions are where streams flow down from the mountains of Persia and irrigate oases.

Farther north, in the latitude of Lake Aral, the plains are not quite so dry. They are covered with a thin growth of grass, but there is not water enough for good

farms. Naturally most of the people in these steppes, as they are called, keep cattle and wander from place to



Nomadic Kirghiz boys. Note that one boy holds a hunting falcon on his wrist, while the other carries a pole with a loop for catching horses

place, according to the amount of grass. Most of them go regularly to certain localities at the same time each year, spending the spring in one place, the summer in another; and so on year after year. The people of the steppes and of the desert are all Mohammedans and belong to the Tartar or Turki race.

North of the dry steppes summer rains become abundant, and a region is found where farming can easily be carried on, although the winters are very cold. The comparative abundance of rain causes trees to grow and great forests to abound. Beside the Siberian Railway white-barked birch cordwood, to be used for the engines, is stacked in piles hundreds of yards long. There is

very little coal in Siberia, and it is much cheaper to burn wood than coal. The inhabitants of this part of Northern Asia are Russians who have emigrated from Europe, bringing with them the Christian religion. They are chiefly farmers who raise a great deal of wheat and other grains.

Still farther north the climate grows colder. Dense forests cover the plains, and the country is almost uninhabited except by hunters. Northward the forests thin out and disappear, and at last the bare, cold tundras are found.

The rivers of Northern Asia are of great size. Two of them—the Amu and Syr-daria—flow from near the high Pamirs and end in Lake Aral. If rain were more abundant the rivers would be still larger, and would cause Lake Aral to rise until a river flowed out from it to the Caspian Sea. The Caspian Sea would also rise and increase in size until it, too, overflowed and sent a river through southern Russia to the Sea of Azov. Wherever a country is very dry, bodies of salt water, like Lake Aral and the Caspian Sea, are almost sure to be found. Their waters are salty because no rivers flow out of them. The rivers which flow into them, like all the other rivers of the world, contain a minute amount of salt. The quantity is not enough to be noticeable in the streams themselves. Every smallest particle of salt, however, remains in the lakes, while the water is evaporated by the sun. Thus the amount of salt continually increases until the waters of some lakes become mere brine.

The other large rivers of Northern Asia are the Irtysh, Ob', Yenisei, and Lena. They receive most of their water from the plateaus northeast of the Tian Shan Mountains. They are of little use for trade because

they are frozen over so long in winter, especially at their mouths, and because they flow to the ice-bound Arctic Ocean instead of to an open ocean like the Atlantic or the Pacific. Hundreds upon hundreds of small lakes lie along their northern courses.

Eastern Asia. The third division of the continent is by far the most important. It is bounded on the north by the plateaus which form the southeastern border of Northern Asia, and on the south and southwest by the Himálayas and the mountains of Burma. It includes the countries of China, Manchuria, Chosen (Korea), Japan, Siam, and Annam. The western part of this division is sharply separated from the eastern part by mountains. It consists of the dry plateau of Mongolia, the desert basin of Chinese or East Turkistan, and the cold barren plateau of Tibet. This whole region may properly be called Inner Asia. It is so dry that there are few plants and animals, and therefore few inhabitants. The remainder of Eastern Asia consists of mountains separated by fertile plains. No part is more than one thousand miles from the sea. The rainfall is everywhere large enough to support a variety of plants. A part of the country, however, is so cold that crops cannot be raised. The rivers are large and can easily be navigated. There is an abundance of coal, iron, and other minerals. All these things together make this a country which can support a great many people.

The fertile part of Eastern Asia is the most thickly-settled region in the world. An area smaller than that of the United States, leaving out Alaska, contains nearly five hundred million people. That is, there are six or seven people for every one in the United States. The total population comprises one-third of all the people in the world. The climate and other conditions of

Eastern Asia are so much more favorable than those of Siberia that where Siberia has one person in a given area Eastern Asia has one hundred fifty.



A Chinese governor in his official robes of silk

The people of Eastern Asia are of the Mongolian race. They are rather short in stature, and they have yellowish skins, high cheek bones, broad faces, and straight black hair. Because the inhabitants are so numerous, the ground must be carefully cultivated in order to furnish food enough for all. This is the chief cause of the ad-

mirable industry and economy in which many Asiatic people are so much ahead of us. The inhabitants of the Far East, as Eastern Asia is called, are divided into Chinese and Japanese, together with Koreans and other less important races, each of which has its own distinctive customs. Most of the inhabitants of Eastern Asia are Buddhists, or worshipers of Buddha, but there are many variations in the religion of different parts of this section. By far the larger part of the people are farmers, although there are a good many merchants and mechanics. There are very few nomads; for such people are found almost wholly in places where crops cannot be raised and where only a small number of inhabitants can get a living.

Southern Asia. The fourth great division of Asia is the part which lies south of the lofty Himálaya Mountains. Southern Asia, as it is called, consists of India and Burma, and the Malay Peninsula. The northern part of India consists chiefly of plains and the southern of plateaus. The remainder of Southern Asia is mountainous, with small plains scattered here and there. The climate is warm everywhere except in the high mountains. Most parts of the country have an abundant rainfall. Unfortunately, the rain sometimes fails to come at the proper season, and great famines are therefore frequent. Northwestern India is the only part where the rainfall is very scanty. Here, however, great rivers come down from the high mountains and provide abundant water for irrigation. Accordingly, plants grow in profusion in most parts of the country, and the number of people is large. The size of Southern Asia is about the same as that of all Europe with the exception of Russia, and it has about the same population—three hundred millions. Southern Asia and Eastern Asia together have as many people as all the other divisions of the world.

In many parts of Southern Asia it is so easy to get a living that many of the people have never learned to work. In the more torrid regions if a man plants a few banana trees or cocoanut palms, he can get a living for himself and his family without any work, except to take care of the trees and pick the fruit. He does not need to make provision for the winter, because there is no really cold weather. Elsewhere the farmers plant rice, millet, and wheat, but these crops do not demand hard work for any length of time. Thus the people have not, as a rule, learned to be industrious. There is nothing to stir them up, and the hot climate destroys

their energy. So they have easily allowed themselves to be ruled by the English, although they have seven



Idols carved in stone at the famous rock-caves of Elephanta Island near Bombay, India

times as many people as England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

Most of the people of Southern Asia are Hindus, who worship hideous idols which are supposed to represent cruel, wicked gods. Many kinds of animals, such as the cow, monkey, and cobra, are also considered holy. The hooded cobra is one of the most dangerous of all snakes. In a single year it kills over 20,000 people in India. It likes to raise itself in the sun and spread out the broad hood on the back of its head. According to the Hindu story, one of the gods was once sleeping by the roadside when the sun began to shine on his head. A cobra came along and saw it. The animal was sorry to see the god's sleep spoiled, and so spread out its hood, and placed itself so that the

shadow covered the god's head until he woke up. The god was so grateful to the cobra that he blessed it, and put on the back of its head the two marks which one sees there. Because of this the Hindus think it wicked to kill a cobra, although they are terribly afraid of the creature. The people are delighted to have a white man kill a cobra, yet, because of their intense superstition, they themselves will give a snake food instead of killing it.

CHAPTER III

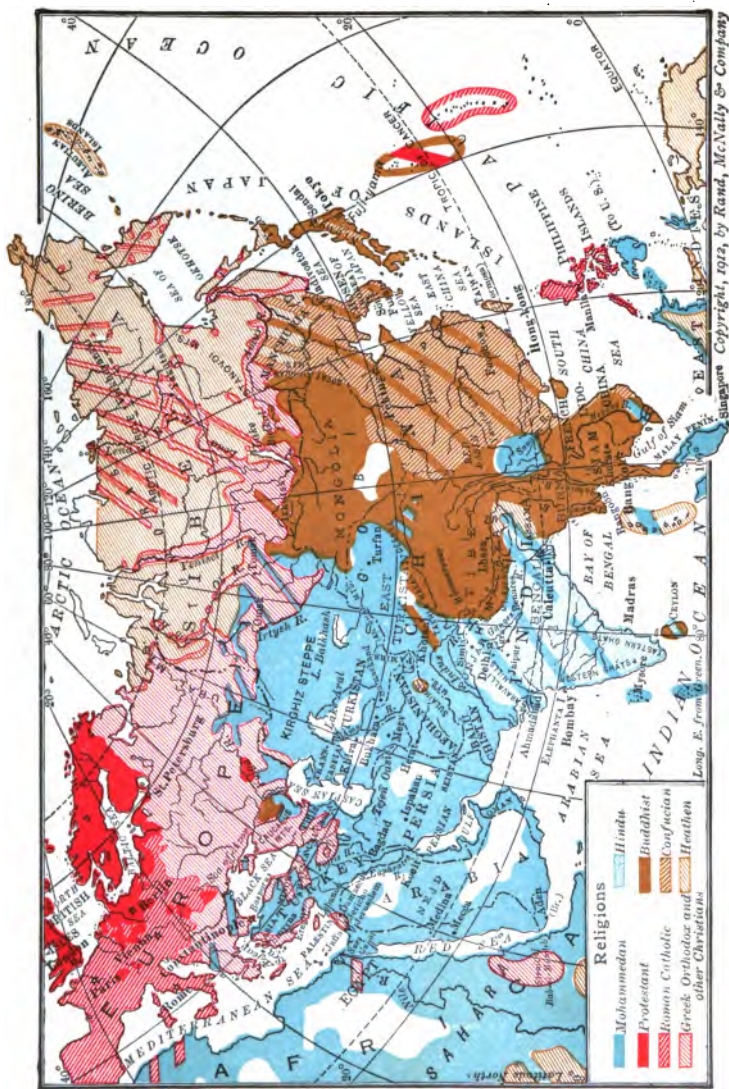
THE RELIGION OF SOUTHWESTERN ASIA

The Hadji's Story. We have seen that the continent of Asia is divided by mountains into four chief divisions. Each of the four has its own peculiar races, government, religion, and customs, as will be shown more fully later. Wherever the mountain barriers are low and easy to cross, the habits, or religion, or other characteristics of one division have passed over somewhat into another; but on the whole the divisions are clearly marked.

In Southwestern Asia most of the people are Moham-medans, and all their habits as to eating, marriage, education, law, and many other matters are regulated by religion. Wherever one goes in Mohammedan countries there are men in large white turbans who go by the name of "hadji," or "pilgrim." One day in Persia a traveler met a crowd of forty or fifty men and boys on horses and donkeys going out of a village with all manner of good things to eat and drink, as if for a picnic. "We're going to bring the hadjis home," they said. "We'll meet them three days' journey away, and bring them home. When we get them here, we'll make a great feast for them. Are they not holy men? Have they not made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and to the sacred tomb of the prophet Mohammed at Medina in Arabia?"

When the pilgrims finally reached home, all their friends invited them to dinner to hear of the wonderful things they had seen. To as many as possible the hadjis gave presents brought from Mecca. In many





The religions of Asia

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cases the present was only three or four dates. However, the people who had stayed at home thought even that a great thing, because it came from the city which they consider the most holy in the world.

One day the traveler heard one of the pilgrims, a white-haired old man with a long beard, tell the story of his journey. "For twenty years I saved my money to go to Mecca," he said. "All my life I had been a good Mohammedan, keeping all the commands of the prophet. I had washed myself and prayed five times a day. I had given presents to all the beggars. During the month of fasting I had never eaten nor drunk all day from sunrise to sunset, though it was terribly hard not to drink during the hot days when I was at work in the harvest field. I wanted also to keep the fourth commandment by going to Mecca. I knew that if I went there I should have a high place in heaven, and all my sins would be forgiven. So I saved my money, and made my wife work hard in the fields to earn more.

"At last my friend and I started. For two months we traveled, sometimes over mountains and across great rivers, and sometimes through desolate wastes of sand and gravel where no man lived. Half of the time I walked, until my shoes were worn out. Then I hired a mule and took turns with another man in riding it. In time we came to Damascus in the desert, a noble city with clear water flowing through its streets, and trees growing all around it. There we joined the great pilgrim caravan of 7,000 men. My friend and I hired a camel—an ugly beast with huge teeth and a flabby hump. Its hair was all gone except a few stray tufts hanging here and there on its great leathery sides. For another month we traveled southward, sometimes on foot and sometimes swaying back and forth on our

slow-pacing camel, which made our backs lame. Always we traveled by night and stopped by day, for it was the



An Arab traveler in an oasis, ready to join a caravan for a journey in the desert

hottest season of the year. By day no one could travel. The sun made the ground hot as a furnace. We spread a few pieces of cloth on sticks and tried to lie in their shadow, but it was too hot to sleep. Everywhere was desert. Sometimes it was a desert of bare gravel, sometimes of rough, rocky mountains, and sometimes of blowing sand. Not a tree was in sight for days.

"There was almost no water at many of our camps. There never was enough to wash with at the time of prayer, so we washed in the dry sand, as the prophet allows men to do in the desert. Often we camped around a dirty pool into which all the animals walked when they came to drink. We had to drive them

away when we wanted to fill our sheepskins with the vile-smelling liquid in order to have something to drink on the next march. One morning, when we had finished a weary walk of twelve hours among rough, naked hills, we found that there was no water in the pool beside the ruined guardhouse of stone. We went on till nine o'clock, then rested through the heat of the day, and in the afternoon started on once more, half dead with thirst. When we reached the water that evening many of the party had been left behind because of exhaustion or illness.

"Finally our camel became lame, and we had to walk all the time. One night we went so slowly that the main caravan got far ahead of us. Suddenly ten Arabs on horses and with spears in their hands came galloping down upon us. Before we knew what had happened they seized the camel and knocked us down. They were feeling in our cloth girdles to get our money when some other stragglers came up, and they hurried off, taking the camel and its load. We were left without food or any supplies, and with ten days still to travel to reach Medina. We were able to buy some food from merchants in the caravan, but the price was ten times what it was worth. We could not buy anywhere else, for the whole country is desert.

"At last we came to Medina, where we bathed and bought new clothes and said our prayers at the tomb of Mohammed. Then we went on once more through the desert to Mecca. We shouted with joy when we saw the sacred city. We thought it the most lovely of all cities and the center of the earth. After washing ourselves many times and saying many prayers we went to the great square temple in the midst of which is the holy black stone sent down from heaven.

"Yes, Mecca is terribly hot, and very dirty. There is very little water and it is always lukewarm, and one has to buy it for a very high price from men who carry it around the street in sheepskin bags. The people, too, are bad, and cheat one all the time. There are so many pilgrims that there is not room for them all. Twenty men hire one small room and sleep in it, lying on the floor as close as they can be packed. For that they pay as much in a month as a man can save in a year. The walls of the houses are made of mud, and some one must always stay in the room or else thieves will dig through the walls and steal everything. Food costs so much that most pilgrims bring with them supplies for the entire trip. That is because there is so little rain in the country around Mecca. If our friends had not helped us after our camel was stolen, our money would not have held out.

"I was so sick that I did not come home with the caravan, but took the much easier route by sea through the Suez Canal, to Constantinople, and so home. Now they have built a railroad from Damascus to Medina, and soon it will be finished to Mecca, so that pilgrims will go the entire way in the train. Perhaps I shall go again. The journey is hard, and Mecca is bad, but if I can go and stay there until I die I shall go straight to the best place in heaven. . . . God is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet."

As the old pilgrim finished his story the men who were listening stroked their beards in memory of Mohammed, and one man remarked: "If God is willing, we, too, shall some day see holy Mecca. It is time for the evening prayer. Don't you hear the mullah calling from the tower of the mosque?"

The crowd arose and went to a fountain near by to

wash their hands. A few of the men went away to the mosque; the others took off their long coats and



Ruins near the Pilgrim Road from Damascus to Mecca

spread them in a row on the ground, in a clean place beside the road. Then each man stepped out of his low shoes, and in his stockinged feet stood on his coat with his face turned toward Mecca. Lifting his hands, the old hadji began to chant the evening prayer, and the others joined in. All in unison, they stretched forward their hands, clasped them on their breasts, put them at their sides, or raised them to their ears. Now and then they knelt down and leaned forward, again and again touching their foreheads to the ground toward Mecca. They did not care who saw them at their prayers. They wanted to be seen, just as they want everyone to know if they give a beggar even one cent. As Mohammed of Mecca and Medina, their prophet and the founder of their religion, did 1,300 years ago, so they do now.

CHAPTER IV

ARABIA: THE LAND OF PLUNDERERS

A Country Sacred to Mohammedans. Although Arabia is a vast country, it has few people and almost no trade because of its dryness. It would not be important if all the Mohammedans of the world did not consider it holy. One person out of every seven in the world is a Mohammedan, who believes that a pilgrimage to Mecca will cause all his sins to be forgiven.

The Suez Canal. The easiest way to reach Arabia is by steamer to Port Said at the northern end of the Suez Canal. From Port Said the great canal stretches southward like a motionless river between straight, earthen embankments, which separate the deep water of the canal from the shallow water of a lake. Soon the lake ends and the canal runs between hills of bare sand. No plants can be seen except a few scraggly little weeds and bushes. No crops can be raised, and it seems as if no one could live there. Nevertheless, from time to time little shanties are seen, belonging mostly to Arabs who work on the canal. As the great ships from Europe steam slowly onward, little Arab children run along the bank and, stretching out their hands to the passengers sitting on the shady decks, cry out, "Backsheesh, backsheesh," which means, "A present, a present."

The Dryness of Arabia. Arabia is one of the driest countries in the world. It has not a single stream of water large enough to be called a river. In the whole distance of 1,600 miles—from Damascus on the north through the middle of the Arabian Peninsula to the south coast—there is not a single stream more than a

few feet wide. In America, if one were to go the same distance in a straight line from New York to Topeka,



A British warship lying at anchor in Back Bay Harbor at the port of Aden, Arabia

Kans., he would cross the Hudson, Delaware, Schuylkill, Ohio, Mississippi, Missouri, and about twenty other great rivers, besides many hundred smaller streams. Except in the midst of large cities, he would never be in a place where he could not see trees or grass. In the whole distance there would be only a few places where he could go much more than a mile without seeing at least one house. In Arabia, on the contrary, he might often go one hundred miles without seeing a single house, or even a tree. He might actually travel two hundred fifty miles, or as far as from Boston to New York, without meeting a single person. Indeed, in the southern part of the peninsula he would find a region as wide as from San Francisco to Salt Lake City—six hundred miles—where no one travels at all, because in the whole distance there is scarcely a single place where drinking water can be found.

The Mountains and Oases of Arabia. Not all of Arabia is so bad as the regions just described. Most parts of the country are dry largely because the winds come from other lands without crossing the sea. In some places, however, the winds come from the ocean and have to rise over mountains. When they rise, the air expands, and so becomes cool and gives up its moisture in the form of rain. This is especially the case in the southwestern and eastern corners of the peninsula. In the southwest the sea is bordered by a low, dry, narrow plain, back of which steep mountains rise to a height of 8,000 feet or more. At the top of the mountainous ascent one finds a comparatively level country—a high plateau—which slopes gently eastward for hundreds of miles until it comes down almost to the sea on the eastern side of the peninsula. On the top of the plateau, and on the ascent to it, the monsoons—steady summer winds from the southwest—give a good rainfall from June to September. Therefore, this part of the country has many trees and villages, and is called Arabia Felix, or Fortunate Arabia. Mecca and Medina lie a little too far north to have much rain. Oman, on the east side of Arabia, like Arabia Felix on the southwest, has rain.

The Arabian Nomads. The largest number of people in Arabia are farmers living in oases, but the most interesting are nomads. It is not easy to live the life of a nomad in Arabia, but it is impossible to live any other life in most parts of the country.

Let us go with the nomads whose attack upon the pilgrims was described in the last chapter. There were ten of them, and they had five camels. Two men rode on each animal. Four days before they had been sitting cross-legged on the ground in a low black tent, drinking little cups of strong coffee. They, and many other

Arabs, were encamped beside a spring of brackish, lukewarm water at the foot of the steep, mountainous slope which forms the western border of the plateau. It was terribly hot, so that when a man went out into the sun he wanted to put on thick clothes to keep out the heat, just as is done in the deep Jordan Valley. The Arabs felt the heat more because they had lately come down from the cooler plateau. Up there the springs had all dried up, so they had been obliged to move down to



Arabs with tents and camels halting in the desert

the lowland, where there was not much grass but where there was a spring which flowed all the time. A few miles away there was another, larger spring. As one looked toward it he could see the tops of palm trees and the gray walls of low, mud houses with flat roofs. The trees stood in large pits about ten feet deep. They had been planted in that way because the only place where the soil is damp is far below the surface. Near the palms could be heard a squeaking sound, which was made by a rope running over a pulley. At one end of the rope was a patient camel, and at the other was a leather bucket

hanging over a deep well. A man drove the camel back and forth. Hour after hour the animal went to and from the well, letting down the bucket and drawing it up again to be emptied into a trough. From the trough the water ran off to the pits and watered the palms.

Desert Raids. As the men in the black tent looked over toward the palms, one of them said to another: "Ah, I wish the dates were ripe. Our bread and our dates are all gone. The rains were poor last year, you know, and the crops were very small. For six weeks now I have not tasted a morsel of solid food. I have lived on nothing but milk. How I hate it! I want



*Arab women carrying water from
a spring in old kerosene cans*

something that I can chew. We had enough to last us a month longer, but a guest came to my tent. I could not send him away. I must honor him, for guests are sent by God. So I took all the rice and dates that we had in the tent and cooked them. When the neighbors passed by and saw us eating, it would have been a sin not to invite them in. They ate all our food. Since then I and my wife and my children have been hungry."

"It is just the same in my tent," said the other. "You remember that two years ago all my camels were stolen. My friends were good to me and gave me six new ones; but one of those died, one I exchanged for food for the winter, and four are left. It is so hot now that they do not give much milk, so we are hungry in my tent. Where can we get something to eat?"

"We cannot rob the people in the village," said the first man. "They are our friends, whom we are bound to protect. They cultivate the palm trees, and we protect them from robbers, and so we divide the dates at harvest time. Come, it is time for the pilgrimage to Mecca. Can't we go and steal something from the pilgrims?"

Each swore to the other not to leave him in the desert. The other men who were in the tent also swore to one another; for the Arab fears treachery, but will never forsake the man to whom he has sworn to be a "companion." Then they took a skin bag full of water and a few dates which one of the other men still had left. With these and their two camels they started off. For three days they hung around the caravan, trying to get a chance to rob some one. They ate all their dates. One day they could not get any water at all. Finally the Arabs fell upon the poor pilgrim and carried off his camel with all its load of food. At first they did not dare stop even to eat, but rode all night as fast as possible to get away. In the morning they saw seven Arabs in the distance, and were much afraid that they belonged to an unfriendly tribe who would try to rob or kill them. Luckily the others did not see our Arabs, who hurried on to get behind a hill. There was not a sign of a road or path. The men knew the way only by the various mountains and hills.

"Over there," said one, "is the place to get a drink. There was a muddy pool there four weeks ago."

When they got to the place the pool was dry. So for another day they had to go without water. When they got home they were almost exhausted. The next week

they sat around idle all the time and did not even take care of their camels, leaving the work to their wives.



Arab boys in Palestine

Sometimes the hungry Arabs go on great raids in large companies, taking with them their famous horses. In many places there is not enough green fodder or water for a delicate animal like the horse, so with

each horse goes a camel as its foster mother. The men milk the camels and give the milk to the horses to drink. This is the only way in which it is possible for horses to live when the people go on long, hard journeys through the waterless desert. The camel is much more hardy than the horse and can travel several days without water.

The life of the Arabs is almost the hardest that can be imagined. Many of them die from fatigue or hunger after their long raids. It seems to us wicked for them to rob one another and kill the people of other tribes, but perhaps we should think and act as they do if our

life were as hard as theirs. Arabia is such a dry, weary land that only the people of Fortunate Arabia, down in the southwest, and of Oman in the east, have enough to live on most of the time. It is not at all strange that the Arabs are plunderers, or that every man fears that every one whom he meets may rob or kill him. Because their land is so dry and barren, the Arabs have learned to endure thirst and hunger in a way that would be wholly impossible for us. Unfortunately when the men have an opportunity to rest they feel so tired that they leave all the work to the women, and thus get the habit of being very lazy. The life of the Arabs is so hard that a great many of them have gone out from Arabia to other countries. They are found in Mesopotamia, Persia, the East Indies, Palestine, and all over the northern half of Africa. In many cases, when they go to other lands, they become farmers or merchants. Since they are thus able to earn a living in other ways, they give up their old plundering habits.



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The Wilderness of the Scapegoat: A view near the Jordan River

CHAPTER V

PALESTINE

The Arab Inhabitants. When the dry climate of Arabia has made the Arabs grow poor and suffer from hunger they have gone, as we have seen, to places where there is more water and, therefore, more food than in the desert. As Palestine is a fairly rich country lying near to Arabia, many Arabs have come into it. To-day the greater part of its people are Arabs. They have not come peaceably. When they were driven out of the dry desert, they fought with the people who held the better lands, and killed them or drove them out. Even now on the eastern border of Palestine the Arabs come occasionally from the desert and plunder the people in the villages east of the Jordan. Sometimes they take away their land and use it themselves; and they would do so much oftener if the Turkish government did not prevent it. Since many tribes have come to Palestine from different parts of the desert, the people of the country are now divided into little tribes. Each tribe has its own dialect, and each lives in its own special region, shut off by barriers from other regions.

The Plateau. In coming from Arabia to Palestine one travels northwestward up a long, gentle slope of rolling desert with some hills. At last, upon reaching Moab, east of the southern end of the Dead Sea, one finds himself on a rather flat, treeless plateau nearly 4,000 feet above the sea. Because Moab is high and is not separated from the sea by mountains higher than itself, it has a fair amount of rainfall during the winter months. Accordingly, the people do not have to be nomads like

their neighbors, but can raise crops and live in villages.

In this high, eastern part of Palestine, between the



Syrian women bringing water from a fountain at Nazareth

Dead Sea and the desert, the days are warm and pleasant in early March, but the nights are cold, and now and then there are storms when a little snow falls, just as it does at the same season in large parts of America. There are no trees, because there is practically no rain in summer. The houses are made of mud fashioned into bricks dried in the sun and then made into walls about two feet thick. Sometimes thieves dig holes in such walls, as they do in Mecca. The roofs, also, are made of mud and are flat, with just slope enough to shed the water during the winter rains. If there were more rain the roofs would probably be built with a slope like ours to shed the water; this would be possible, because if there were more rain there would be more trees to use for timber.

A Village of Moab. The streets of a Moab village are like narrow, dirty alleys. Often two women are seen sitting on the bare ground and slowly turning a large stone, round and flat with a hole in the middle of it. Through the hole they keep pouring handfuls of wheat, which is caught between the stone which they are turning and another stone lying below it. In this way the grain is ground into flour. It takes about five hours to grind enough flour for a fair-sized family for one day. The women have little time for any house-keeping except cooking and grinding. When the flour is ready, four or five women go together to an oven of clay, shaped like a beehive, which stands in the street. In this, one woman makes a fire of little weeds and twigs, or of cakes of dried dung mixed with straw. She cannot get wood or coal. When the oven has become very hot the women take flat cakes of dough and clap them against the sides of the oven over the hot embers. There they stick until the bread is baked, when the cakes fall down into the ashes and have to be pulled out. The women take turns in furnishing the fuel. The one whose turn it is to furnish it has to bake her bread last, so that she may be sure to keep the oven hot until all have finished.

The Ghor. From the top of one of the highest houses in the village one gets a wide view. Westward toward Palestine a rolling plain extends for a few miles, and then the plateau suddenly breaks off into a tremendous valley. It is impossible to see the bottom of the valley, but the farther side is in plain sight. There another plateau appears, nearly as high as the one on which we stand but not so large. Villages surrounded by trees can be seen easily on a clear day. They are only thirty or forty miles away. These villages are in Judea, near Jerusalem

and Bethlehem. In the Bible story Ruth, when she left her home on the plateau of Moab to go with her mother-



Rachel's tomb at Bethlehem

in-law to Bethlehem, called these places a "far country." It seemed to her very far, because her country is separated from Judea by the deep valley of the Ghor, as it is called, which is not at all easy to cross. Because it is so hard to pass from side to side of the Ghor, the people of Judea and Moab have had very little to do with one another and have often been enemies.

The rocky path from the plateau down into the Ghor winds between great cliffs of limestone. Within twelve miles there is a descent of four thousand feet. Mile after mile the air grows warmer. In the morning, when one starts, it is frosty on the plateau. At noon one comes to the smooth plain at the bottom of the Ghor, and finds the thermometer reading between eighty and ninety. No wonder it is hot, for the bottom of the Ghor is more than a thousand feet below the level of the ocean.

At the mouth of the narrow valley by which the road descends is seen a broad plain, eight or ten miles wide. Northward, where it extends seventy miles to the Sea of Galilee, it is beautifully green with thick, tall grass. Crops of wheat ripen here in April, and on the farther side, at the foot of the cliffs of Judea, the palm trees of Jericho show how warm the climate must be.

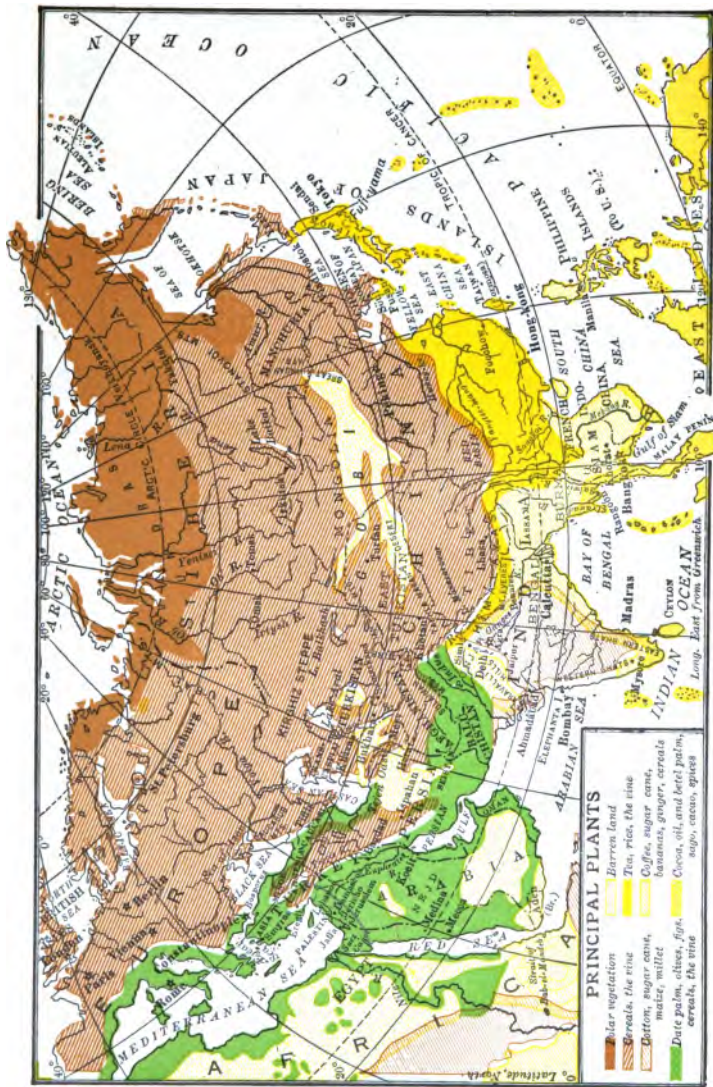
The Dead Sea. Southward the view is less pleasant. Green grass is there replaced by a queer, salty plain, slimy in places, and in others rough with humps of salt. Thousands of years ago this part of the plain was the bed of the Dead Sea, then much larger than now. That strange sea, 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, still forms a lake nearly fifty miles long. It is so full of salt that no animals can drink the water, and no fish can live in it except at the mouths of the rivers. When people bathe in the sea they find that the water is so heavy with salt that they cannot keep their bodies wholly under. When one walks out until the water reaches his armpits the water lifts him so that he finds himself wiggling his toes to touch the bottom. If the water gets into the eyes or into a cut it stings dreadfully; and when it dries on the skin it leaves a prickly, disagreeable, oily layer of salt.

The Dead Sea is fed chiefly by the Jordan River, a swift, muddy stream which winds in many curves between banks of sand and gravel. It is one of the few rivers which have not carved their own valleys. On the contrary, it flows in a trough formed by the dropping down of a slice of the earth's crust. It rises on the high slopes of Mount Hermon, but for most of its course its bed lies lower than the ocean. Like all rivers, the Jordan contains a little salt, and this has been concentrated in the Dead Sea, just as the salt of other rivers has been

concentrated in the sea of Aral and scores of lakes in the drier parts of Asia. If the lake, that is, the Dead Sea, had an outlet, the salt would be carried away.

Sheep and Shepherds. In crossing the plain of the Ghor one often meets shepherds living in little tents or in the open air with their sheep. This is especially true at the end of winter, when they come down from the plateaus. There it is not yet warm and the grass has not begun to grow, but the plain of the Ghor is covered with a thick carpet of verdure. So the shepherds migrate twenty or thirty miles, and live in the warm Ghor for a month or two. A shepherd once told a traveler some stories of his sheep. "We shepherds all know every one of our sheep," he said. "If they are lost we can recognize them even after several years. If a sheep wanders and joins another flock, the owner can always get it back if he can describe its marks and prove that it is his. The people are very honest about this. Once a shepherd lost a mother-sheep. After five years he saw it one day in the flock of another man. When the owner proved that it was his, the other man not only gave it back, but gave back its children and grandchildren and their children—sixteen in all."

"Another time," said the same shepherd, "there was very little rain one winter in Judea, and the grass was so poor that my sheep began to suffer. I heard that more rain had fallen in Moab, so I took my flock and went across the Ghor. After many weeks I heard that rain had fallen at home. The sheep were fat, and I went very slowly, only seven or eight miles a day. At night I had to watch them, and I became very tired. After four days I camped in the barren country halfway out of the Ghor, on the west side. I could not keep awake, and while I slept some wolves attacked the flock. When



The principal plants of Asia

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I woke up every one of my forty sheep was dead. I thought now that I could never get another flock, and must go away to work. But the people in my village were very kind. One gave one sheep, one two, and another three, and now I have a good flock."

The Plateau West of the Jordan. The narrow slice of the earth's crust which has dropped down to form the Ghor is bounded on either side by cliffs and steep mountain slopes, marking the line of breakage between the low Jordan Valley and the plateaus on either side. At the top of the slope on the west lies the western plateau. This forms the central part of Palestine and includes Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Its highest part is an open, rolling country, but on the edges it has been much cut into by small rivers so that it is extremely rough. Naturally the chief towns and roads are on the highest part, where it is smoothest. That is the best place to live, not only because it is the smoothest but because it is high enough to cause the air coming from the Mediterranean Sea to rise and become cool, and deposit its water as rain.

A Village of Judea — Olives and Figs. Most of the people of the western plateau are farmers. They all live in villages with the houses close together, and go out to their fields every day. Around each village there are large orchards of gray-leaved olive trees. Some of them are huge old trees that have lived several centuries and are all gnarled and twisted. The olive is one of the most important crops in Palestine, for it is one of the few things for which the people can get ready money with which to pay their taxes to the Turkish government. In many places everybody is afraid that his neighbors will steal his olives, so no one is allowed to begin gathering his crop before a certain day appointed by the village

officers. If olives are found in any man's house before that day he is thought to have stolen them. Large



An old olive orchard in Palestine

cloths are spread under the trees, and then the men and boys climb up and beat the branches with sticks to get off the fruit. If the olives are to be pickled in the form that we know them, it is best to pick them green, but for olive oil they have to be ripe. The old way of getting out the oil was to crush the olives between two great millstones. The upper stone was turned by a horse or a donkey, or even a man. Now presses, something like cider mills, are used.

Figs are another great crop. When fresh they are considered most luscious by those who have learned to like them—far better than the dried kind. Some villages have as many as thirty varieties. Each tree bears two crops, one of which ripens two or three months before

the other. Every one likes the early, sweet ones. Oddly enough, there is a custom which allows the passer-by to pick the early figs from any trees that he happens to see.

Grapes and Barter. The fellahin, as the villagers are called, have vineyards where fine grapes are raised. They surround them with mud walls, and on the tops of the walls put thorny bushes to keep people from climbing over and stealing the fruit. Animals, as well as men, like grapes. If the tops of the walls are not too thorny, dogs, foxes, jackals, and even bears and wolves sometimes climb over to have a feast. In most parts of America grapes are more or less a luxury; but in Palestine rich and poor eat them for months. They are so cheap that when the people go to market they often exchange three pounds of grapes for one pound of wheat. With us it is just the other way—a pound of grapes is worth at least three pounds of wheat, and often more.

Many of the people of Palestine do not reckon values in money, but in wheat. Except in the cities and along the routes where tourists travel



A Syrian peasant with his basket of grapes

money is so scarce that trade is carried on by barter or exchange. A merchant sells a knife for two bushels of wheat, and a farmer buys a sheep for thirty. The fellahin are as simple in other ways as in their barter. For instance, a man lent some money and took a note for it. Instead of saying that the money would be paid on such a day of such a month, the note said it would be paid when the cucumbers were ripe again. The people do not remember the day of the month, but everyone knows when the different crops begin to ripen.

The Maritime Plain and the Seacoast. West of the central plateau of Palestine the country slopes gradually down to the sea. The seacoast is bordered by a fertile strip called the Maritime Plain. This is the best part of the country for raising grain. It is warm because it is low, and it is near enough to the sea to have a fair amount of rain. Where irrigation is possible lemons and oranges are most profitable crops, especially around Jaffa.

Jaffa is the chief seaport of Palestine. It is not a good harbor, for it has no protection from the waves, and in bad weather no ships can land. In good weather large steamers come to anchor a long distance from shore, and people are carried to the land in little boats. Once some Americans came from Egypt in winter and wanted to land at Jaffa. It was so stormy that the travelers could not take a little boat to go ashore, so they went on with the steamer to Beirut, in Syria, and came back again. Once more it was too stormy for them to land, and they had to go on to Egypt and return a third time. It was almost as stormy as before, but this time they were bound to reach land. They hired a little boat for themselves and another for their baggage. Their own boat landed safely, although every

one was drenched in the breakers; but the other boat was tipped over, and almost all of the baggage was lost.



View of the Temple inclosure and Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem

Lines of Communication. With such poor harbors it is natural that Palestine should never have had much trade by sea. The roads in the interior are not good, either. A railroad has been built from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and another from Haifa to the south end of the Sea of Galilee, and so to Damascus. There it connects with the line, already mentioned, which runs east of Palestine through Moab to Medina and the holy places of Arabia. In ancient times the chief road in Palestine led from Damascus past the Sea of Galilee, across the northern end of Samaria where the western plateau is very low, and so down the Maritime Plain southward to Egypt. This road did not touch Jerusalem because it is not easy to reach that city. Thus, when the armies of the Syrians and Assyrians came against Egypt they

usually did not go to Jerusalem. This is one reason why Jerusalem continued so long to be the capital of Judea after Samaria was destroyed.

Cisterns. One of the greatest difficulties in Palestine, as in all of Southwestern Asia, is the lack of water in summer. If a man is going to build a house, he often goes to work first to build a cistern. This is partly in order to have some water on hand while the house is being built. It takes a great deal of water to mix up the mud of which the walls and roof are made. A large part of the villagers have no water at all in summer, except what they are able to store in cisterns. These cisterns are built of a sort of lime plaster and have dome-shaped roofs with a round hole at the top. Toward the end of the summer the water usually gets very low, and often that which remains in the bottom of the cistern becomes bad. Sometimes people go out at night and steal water from one another. Accordingly, at this season, many people sleep out of doors on top of their cisterns.

The Coming of the Rain. Everyone watches most eagerly for the first sign of a storm. The man who sees a little cloud in the west proclaims the good news that the rain is coming. If it does not come at the right time the crops suffer and the poor go hungry. In the fall clouds begin to gather on the western horizon, especially at sunset. Distant lightning plays across the sky, and an occasional slight shower falls at night. After a few days the clouds gather more thickly, the roll of thunder is heard, and at last torrents of rain pour down. The people have made all their preparations. They have mended the earthen roofs of the houses and rolled fresh clay into the cracks. The cisterns have been cleared out, and all the channels leading to them

have been repaired. Everything is ready, too, for the planting of crops. Plows have been put in order, and



A street in Jerusalem

the oxen are ready to draw them. The soil has been hoed up around the fruit trees, and the walls of the mud houses have been supported with fagots so that the rain may not wash them away on the exposed side.

As soon as the earth is well moistened the farmers go out and sow the grain. Many sow the seed first and then plow it under. Some plow both before and after the seed has been sown. If the rain is very late and the seed cannot be sown by the last of October or during November, great loss is suffered, because the crops sprout so late that they cannot mature sufficiently before the "latter" rains come to an end in April.

The Holy City of Jerusalem. Although Palestine is a very small region it is the most interesting of all countries

from a religious point of view. It is the "Holy Land" of Jews and Christians; and even to the Mohammedans it is the most holy place after Mecca. Jerusalem, the chief city, has only sixty or seventy thousand people—less than Duluth, Minnesota—but it is great because of its history. Thousands of pilgrims from various parts of eastern Europe, and of tourists from western Europe and America, visit it every year. The city is surrounded by large monasteries and church buildings belonging chiefly to the Roman Catholic and Greek churches. At most of the sites of great events in Biblical history churches and shrines have been built by Christians of every kind. Unfortunately, the various sects of Christians do not always agree. Therefore the Mohammedan Turks, who rule the land, station soldiers to guard the holy places. Besides the many kinds of Christians and Mohammedans, there are in Jerusalem numerous Jews who are restoring some of the ancient Jewish sites and are planting colonies. The natives of Palestine are partly Christians of the so-called Greek church, and partly Mohammedans. All, however, live in much the same way except in the cities.

CHAPTER VI

SYRIA AND MESOPOTAMIA

Lebanon. Nearly three thousand years ago, when King Solomon wanted timber for his great temple in Jerusalem, he could not find the right kind in Palestine. He had to send away to the north to Hiram, King of Tyre, and get cedars from Lebanon. The distance from Jerusalem to Lebanon is not great—only one hundred sixty miles, or as far as from Omaha to Kansas City—but the climate of the two places is quite different. Lebanon is a high mountain range standing close to the sea and reaching a height of more than nine thousand feet, or twenty-five hundred feet more than Mount Mitchell, the highest point of the Appalachians. Naturally the west winds coming from the Mediterranean rise suddenly and become greatly cooled, so that they give up much rain. Therefore the climate is more moist than that of Palestine. Hence the kingdom of Hiram contained many fine trees, and even now the mountains of Lebanon have more trees than the country round about, and the region at their western base is rich, because of its climate.

The Harbors of Syria and the Phoenicians. On the map one can see that as they continue northward the plateaus of Palestine grow higher, forming the two mountain ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. The Ghor also continues as a valley in which flow two rivers—the Litani toward the south and the Orontes toward the north. Where the Litani turns westward it cuts across the range of Lebanon in a wonderful canyon. In one place the canyon is so narrow that the river actually

flows for a short distance underground, beneath a great arch of limestone—a huge bridge made by Nature.



A Circassian oxcart in Syria

The coastal plain of Palestine dies out north of Mount Carmel, and the shore line is not so smooth as farther south. Ages ago the country north of Carmel was lowered a little, while that to the south was raised. Hence the northern shore became somewhat irregular, and possesses some fairly good harbors. In the old days the Phœnicians used these harbors, and by reason of them became a great commercial people. They were the first nation to use letters resembling those of our alphabet. They traveled far to the west from their good harbors and taught their way of writing to the Greeks and Romans, who in turn were our teachers. So to-day, in the letters which we use, we preserve a reminder of the fact that the well-watered region of Phœnicia or Syria, on the slopes of the Lebanon Mountains, had harbors fitted for the trade of ancient times.

Damascus, the Queen City of the Desert. As Syria has much rain, it naturally has many people, compared with the surrounding regions. On each side of the mountains there is a great city: Beirut, the center of ocean trade on the west, and Damascus, the center of desert traffic on the east. The Arabs call Damascus one of the four gardens of Eden. They say that there is no city like it in beauty, and no city which has such clear and delicious water. To them it is an earthly paradise, because, although it lies on the very edge of the desert, it is wholly surrounded by trees. The city itself is not beautiful. Its streets, narrow and dirty, wind in and out among high mud walls of houses with no windows except small grated holes. The people are often ragged, though some are dressed in gorgeous turbans and long, gay gowns. Sometimes a rich man, in a voluminous white turban and a long blue gown, is seen riding on a large white donkey, his waving feet close to the ground. Everyone uses donkeys or camels. White donkeys, which are larger than others, are considered the most dignified of animals. Young men ride horses, but older men ride white donkeys and pay very high prices for them. In modern days, however, the donkey has lost some of his work, for electric street cars have been introduced into Damascus. They are run by power furnished by the ancient Abana (Barada) River. Their speed amazes the numerous street dogs, who have not yet learned that the tracks are not a good place for a nap.

Although Damascus itself is not a particularly attractive city, it is very beautiful when seen from a distance. Bare, naked hills of limestone rise on the west, while toward the east lies the great parched desert where the Arabs wander. Near the city miles and miles of most

beautiful orchards abound in all sorts of luscious fruit, such as apricots, figs, and grapes. It is not strange that the contrast between these fair, well-watered gardens and the desert makes the Arabs speak extravagantly of Damascus. The fame and greatness of Damascus depend upon a fact not often noticed. The streams which water the city come through the mountains of Anti-Lebanon from the west side, where there is much rain. If the streams from the west side of the mountains did not cut across to the dry east side in deep gorges, there would be no great city of Damascus, because there would be no water.

The Syrian Desert and Mesopotamia. From Damascus caravans go northeastward through the Syrian Desert to Palmyra (Tadmor), a five or six days' journey. There they see the ruins of one of the most famous cities of history. The beautiful Arab queen, Zenobia, lived in this city until the Romans took her to Rome as a captive, about three hundred years after Christ. Now the only inhabitants are a few poor Arabs who live in mud houses, most of which are huddled together inside the walls of what was once the magnificent Temple of the Sun. Beyond Palmyra the caravans hasten eastward in great fear of Arab plunderers. At last they come to the Euphrates River, and to Mesopotamia. There, too, they find enormous ruins of magnificent cities, around which are pitched the black tents of poor, plundering Arabs.

At Nineveh, on the northeast side of Mesopotamia, archæologists have dug from the ground the ruins of some of the greatest buildings in the world. Huge processions of gigantic animals and men, carved in stone, lead to ruined palaces and temples, where thousands of people once passed to and fro. In other places enormous mounds have been dug open, and inside of them have

been found large libraries and a great variety of articles which show us how the ancient people lived. The libraries did not consist of books like ours, but of bricks of clay dried in the sun. On the sides of the sun-dried bricks letters were stamped in the same way that we sometimes stamp figures on cookies. Such bricks, or



Ruins of a colonnaded street in Palmyra

tablets, do not seem like very good records, but they last long in a dry country, and some of them are four or five thousand years old.

Once Mesopotamia was the center of the strongest nations in the world. Now, as a whole, it is nothing but an enormous plain with no inhabitants except a few Arabs and Kurds scattered here and there. It has a few cities such as Bagdad, famous for its gardens. In some places, such as Koeit, near the mouth of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, the water of the rivers is turned on to the plain, and millions of palm trees are irrigated. It is said that when the rivers are in flood

the water often covers the plain for many miles. The people take refuge on the small mounds where they have built their houses. While the flood lasts they look abroad over a great lake, above whose surface the feathery tops of palm trees rise like small islands.

In spring the desert section of Mesopotamia is covered with millions of the brightest wild flowers, making great patches of red, blue, or yellow. A few places are green with fields of wheat planted by the Arabs. Oddly enough, sheep are often seen eating the wheat. The Arabs say that if the sheep are allowed to eat off the tops of the young wheat, each root will send up two or three shoots instead of only one, and they will get more grain than if the animals are kept out. As soon as the spring rains are past, Mesopotamia dries up. For miles and miles everything is brown and bare. There is not a sign of people anywhere, except close to the river—nothing but blowing sand and dust.

Mesopotamia might support many million people, but misgovernment and the raids of plundering Arabs have prevented the inhabitants from increasing and prospering. Always the Arabs are fighting with one another, or with the Turks and Kurds. The rivers keep changing their courses and forming unhealthful swamps. Little by little the country has been growing worse, but a change is at hand. English engineers have made surveys for the Turkish government, the rivers will again be made to irrigate the land, and the ancient prosperity will some day be restored.

CHAPTER VII

ANATOLIA: THE LAND OF THE SUNRISE

The Greek Fringe of Asia Minor. Anatolia is the Greek word for "sunrise" and also the word for "east." More than three thousand years ago, before the days of Homer, the Greeks began to row or sail from island to island in the Ægean Sea. They had very small boats and did not dare go far from land, for fear they would be caught on the open sea at night or in a storm. Nevertheless, because there are so many islands in the Ægean Sea, they were able to travel far, until at length they came to the mainland of Asia Minor on the east. Naturally, they called the country Anatolia, or "Eastland." The name has come down to us and is now used for the peninsula of Asia Minor, the western part of Turkey-in-Asia.

The Greeks never went far inland in Anatolia, for the mountains rise steeply close to the shore, and the people among the mountains and on the plateau at the top were not friendly. It was easy to go along the shore, especially on the west. There the coast is cut to pieces, for it is pierced by hundreds of deep bays which are separated and protected by peninsulas and islands. On the map it looks almost as if the western part of the country had been fringed like a towel. On the north and south coasts the Greeks did not find it quite so safe to travel as on the west, because there the harbors are poor. Nevertheless, after a time, they learned to make larger boats, like the one in which Jason and his companions went in search of the Golden Fleece. Then they went sailing along all the coasts of Asia Minor and founded

many prosperous colonies. That was more than two thousand years ago; but even now the borders of



Turkish children carrying grain from the fields in Anatolia

Anatolia are inhabited largely by Greeks, while the interior of the country is occupied by Turks, Armenians, and other races.

The Surface Features of Anatolia. Anatolia is a plateau with mountains around the edge and a basin in the center. Long ages ago it was lifted from beneath the sea, and parts of it stood even higher than they do now. Most of the larger streams flowed toward the west. They cut deep valleys, between which great ridges of the plateau jugged westward like fingers from a hand. In those days, long before the coming of man, the ridges extended far toward Greece. Then the western part of the country sank and much of it was "drowned" beneath the sea. The water entered the valleys and made them into gulfs and bays, while the ridges stood

out as islands or peninsulas. Thus the coast became highly irregular and very favorable for navigation, even for a people like the Greeks, who did not yet know much about the sea.

On the north and south of Anatolia mountain ranges run parallel to the sea; therefore there are no good harbors. A few years ago some travelers wanted to land at Samsun on the north coast. They started from Constantinople in a large steamer and sailed up the Bosphorus. For twenty miles they seemed to be sailing on a broad river, although the water was salty. Ages ago, before the country last sank, the Bosphorus was a river flowing out from the Black Sea, which was then a vast lake. Now the valley has been drowned. From the mouth of the Bosphorus the steamer sailed eastward in a storm. At Samsun great waves were pounding on the beach, and it seemed impossible to land. The steamer had to anchor half a mile from the shore, but before her anchors were out a crowd of little rowboats came bobbing over the waves and surrounded the ship. The oarsmen shouted and yelled at the top of their voices. The passengers climbed carefully down a ladder and were helped into rowboats. Near the shore it looked as if the boats would be swamped in the surf. To the travelers' surprise the rowers jumped out into the water up to their armpits and steadied the boats. Then they motioned to the passengers to sit on their shoulders, put their hands around their foreheads, and thus be carried ashore through the breakers. The baggage was landed in the same way; but the heavy cargo had to wait several days until the storm was over. As most of the harbors on the north and south coasts of Anatolia are equally bad, it is not strange that the great lines of trade have always been from the western coast up the valleys to the plateau. In

modern times railroads have been built along the same lines. Their chief difficulty is to find an easy way down from the plateau on the south side in order to reach Mesopotamia and Syria.

Smyrna, on the west coast of Anatolia, has become one of the important cities of the world because the drowning of the mouth of a valley has given it a good harbor, and because the valley gives an easy way of getting up to the plateau, which forms the main portion of the country. The city has some disadvantages, however. The rivers from the plateau bring down a great deal of mud and deposit it in the harbor. In the days of Greece and Rome, Ephesus, which lies south of Smyrna, was on the seashore; but now the harbor has been so completely filled by the mud from the river that the ruins of the old city are six miles from the water. Such filled-in bogs now form smooth plains of fertile soil. These narrow plains are very rich and are highly cultivated. On them are raised the famous Smyrna figs, oranges, and other subtropical fruits.

On the north and south coasts of Anatolia the streams deposit mud and silt just as on the west; but, instead of filling up drowned valleys and forming long, narrow plains running back far into the mountains, they form triangular deltas projecting out into the water.

The Anatolian Plateau. In order to reach the central plateau of Anatolia it is necessary to climb the steep mountain slopes on the north or the south side or else to go up the long western valleys. Naturally the easiest route is up the western valleys, and therefore the railroads follow them. As one goes inland from Smyrna the plain grows narrower and at last gives place to a narrow gorge up which the railroad climbs. The country grows drier, too, and the valley sides become

naked and rocky. Except during the dry summer season, there is plenty of rain along the coasts of Anatolia. Winds from the Mediterranean and Black seas blow over the land, and when they strike the steeply-rising shores and are obliged to rise they give up their moisture in abundance. When they cross the rim of the mountains which surround the plateau, and descend a little to the plateau itself, they no longer contain much water. Accordingly the interior of Anatolia is dry. As might be expected, a basin-shaped part of the plateau is occupied by a large salt lake, called Tuz Göl.

As one approaches the top of the plateau, a change takes place in the landscape. The valley walls cease to be steep and inaccessible. They recede from the streams, the whole country opens out, and soon the railroad train is running across the broad, rolling uplands of the main plateau. Various other things have changed also. Down on the coast there are trees and many green places. Here one looks abroad for miles and sees scarcely a single tree. Except in spring or near the villages, there is nothing green in sight. Down on the coast the villages consist of groups of houses scattered among fruit trees. The roofs are made of red tiles and have a slope to shed the rain. Often they are covered with storks' nests. Sometimes as many as ten storks build their large nests of sticks on a single roof, and one may see half a dozen of the great white birds standing solemnly on a house-top, each with one long leg drawn up out of sight.

The Villages of Anatolia. Up on the plateau the villages are far from beautiful. They consist of groups of flat-roofed mud houses huddled together as closely as possible. The walls of adjoining houses touch each other, and one can walk all around the village by

stepping from roof to roof. The chief reason for the flat roofs is that the period of summer drouth is too



A typical town in Asia Minor

long to permit the growth of many trees. Hence wood is too expensive to use in building sloping roofs. Moreover, there is so little rain that this is unnecessary. In winter, on the other hand, the country is cold because it lies high above the sea, and much snow falls since that is the season of storms. Since the roofs are flat the snow must be shoveled off into the streets. In the larger towns, where the houses are often built with two stories, it is interesting to see how a man will push a big shovelful of snow off the roof to the street below, and then peek over the edge to see if he has hit any one. In the villages the snow is sometimes heaped up so high in the streets that it forms piles reaching far above the roofs of the one-story houses. Great hollows have to be dug in the snow to get to the doors of the houses. Once

a man came into the city and said that his son had broken an arm by falling off the street on to the roof of the house. Of course everybody thought that he had said street in place of roof, but he had not. The boy had actually broken his arm by falling off one of the great piles of snow on to the flat mud roof. Such a thing could happen only in a country like the Anatolian Plateau.

An Anatolian village is not a clean place. All sorts of dirty things are thrown into the streets. A traveler, approaching in the dark, can detect a village a quarter of a mile away by the peculiar, disagreeable smell. He is quite sure to hear dogs barking, too. Every village has many thin, short-haired dogs which belong to no one. They are never fed, but simply live on the refuse which people throw into the streets. If it were not for the dogs the people would suffer from sickness much more than they do, for the dogs, together with the ugly vultures that one sees everywhere, eat up all the bad things which would otherwise decay and cause disease.

The Nomads of Anatolia. Among the open plains and rolling mountains of Anatolia much of the land is not occupied, for it is too dry to be cultivated without irrigation. Naturally there are many shepherds in such a land. The village people, who raise wheat and other crops, are largely Turks. They do not like the name Turk, but call themselves Osmanlis. The shepherds are partly Turks and partly Yuruks and Turkomans. Part of the year they live in villages, but in summer they go out into the higher mountains and live in little, low tents of dark brown goat's-hair cloth. They are very hospitable. In a village the traveler must usually spend the night in the so-called guest room, which is set aside for the use of anyone who happens to come along. Often

it is very dirty and is full of fleas and other extremely disagreeable insects. Hence in warm weather one is



A Turk sowing wheat in Anatolia

always glad to do as the people do and sleep on the flat roof. It is cool and pleasant there, and no rain falls in summer. When the people are living in tents their hospitality is much more pleasant. The traveler usually sleeps on the ground, as do the people. He merely spreads out a thick quilt or thin mattress, puts another of the same kind over him, and his bed is made.

As soon as a guest arrives the headman of the village is called. In order to make a suitable feast in honor of the stranger, he often tells a boy to run and get a lamb from a flock which some other boys are taking care of. Each ragged boy wears at his side a little bag in which he carries some bread for dinner. Besides the bag, every one has a stick and a simple flute made of wood.

The boys know how to make the flutes themselves, and they play them very well. Often, when the traveler is far from any village and a mile or two from tents, he hears the sound of a flute and sees a boy walking along while his sheep come behind, following the music. The boys are not at all afraid to go into the mountains alone, although sometimes they meet wolves. Such boys generally do not know anything about reading or school.

A Turkish Dinner. When the boys have caught a lamb, they bring it back to the tents, and it is cooked. When it is ready, a little after sunset, all the men gather in front of the chief's tent. The women have to stay away and keep their faces covered, because they are Mohammedans, and no woman is supposed to be seen by any man except her husband and brothers without having a veil over her face. The whole family does not eat together. The mother and daughters must wait till the father and sons eat, because women and girls are commonly despised. The Koran says that they have no souls.

The method of eating is much the same among the Turks, whether they be rich, learned men like the old-fashioned mullah at Eregli or simple villagers. When it is time for the feast a cloth is spread on the ground in front of the tent. On it some one places a great many pieces of bread, forming a ring around the center. The bread consists of flat, crusty sheets, the shape and thickness of griddle cakes but much larger—about the size of our biggest plate. Fresh onions or large peppers, either green or red, are placed here and there on the bread. When all is ready the guests sit down cross-legged on the ground around the cloth. As they take their places a great dish full of rice cooked

in fat is brought in, and with it is the meat of the lamb and some bowls of sour milk. No spoons, forks, knives, or plates are to be seen, and one wonders how it will be possible to eat. That does not trouble the natives. While the servants, or the young men, have been putting the food on the cloth, a boy has gone around to each person with a pitcher of water and a bowl.



Women of Western Turkey

Each one holds out his hands over the bowl and rinses them in the stream of water which the boy pours from the pitcher. Then the men roll back their sleeves a little and wait for some one to begin. The host urges them to eat, and they all reach out to the dish and help themselves with their hands. They take the meat in their fingers and, tearing it apart, offer pieces to one another before eating any themselves. Between the mouthfuls of rice, which they deftly pick up with their greasy fingers, they eat a little bread or take a piece of it to use as a scoop with which to ladle up some

of the sour milk, which has about the consistency of custard. No one talks, for that is not considered polite during meals. Occasionally spoons are used, but good Mohammedans think they are not necessary. Mohammed said that the hands were the proper things to eat with, and his followers all over Asia eat in much the same way as the Turks and Turkomans of Asia Minor. After the meal the pitcher and bowl are brought around again for the guests to wash their hands.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ARMENIAN PLATEAU

Surface Features. As the Anatolian Plateau is followed eastward it becomes higher and narrower. The high part extends from about the line of the western bend of the Euphrates River to the Caspian Sea. It is called the Armenian Plateau. It has many high ridges of mountains upon it, and is by no means so regular as the Anatolian Plateau.

In the distant past a great many volcanoes existed in this part of the world and built up mountains of lava rising high above the plateau. The most famous of these is Mount Ararat, one of the highest mountains of western Asia. The people who live near by are afraid to climb it, because they foolishly think that it is inhabited by evil spirits. They believe that pieces of Noah's ark are to be found on its top. Another volcano is Nimrud Dagh, on the edge of Lake Van. Its summit has the form of a huge hollow crater, perfectly round, and about five miles across. The deep, black crater is occupied by a lake fed by springs which are still heated by the warmth coming from the underlying rocks. In winter one side of this queer lake may be covered with thick ice, while the other side is warm and steaming like a Turkish bath.

Another feature which diversifies the Armenian Plateau is the river valleys. Naturally a great many large rivers start from such a high region. At first they flow on top of the plateau among the bare, rolling uplands, but soon they have to cut across ridges or pass through volcanic mountains or go down the side of the

plateau. In such places they have gradually cut tremendous canyons. One of the finest of these is that of the Euphrates. Where this river crosses the Taurus Mountains, before reaching the plain of Mesopotamia, it flows through a gorge a mile deep. The water thunders over great rapids where no boat can escape being upset. The gorge is so narrow and its sides so steep that no one can get into it except by floating down the river, which is done by means of rafts made of inflated sheepskins. The natives remove the skins of the dead sheep without cutting any part except the neck. Then they blow into the bags which are thus formed and fill them with air. The necks are next tied up so that the bags are like big bladders. They are fastened under a light wooden frame and form fine rafts which can go safely through almost any rapids. When a journey down the river has been finished the raft is simply taken to pieces and the empty skins are put on the backs of donkeys or horses to be carried back up the river. Such rafts carry much grain and other produce down the lower Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and are also used by fishermen. Unfortunately, they can be used only to go downstream, for they cannot be paddled up against the current. Often when the natives want to cross a river they blow up a skin and support themselves upon it while they swim with their feet.

The Basin-Plains of Armenia. The Armenian Plateau is made uneven not only by the volcanoes which rise above the plateau and the river gorges which cut deep below it but by many large blocks of country, from five to one hundred miles long, which have slowly sunk one or two thousand feet. Such sunken blocks form great basins. Some of them contain lakes, like Van in Turkey, Gokcha in Russia, and Urumia in Persia.

Others have been partly filled by sand and clay brought down by streams from every side. They appear as



A village on the Armenian Plateau

smooth, fertile plains surrounded by mountains. As the plains are lower than the rest of the country they are comparatively warm, and as they are made of fine silt their soil is rich. So they are decidedly the best part of the country. Of course they are dry in summer, but plenty of streams come down from the mountains, so that irrigation is easy.

The large basin of Urumia, in the Persian part of the Armenian Plateau, contains both a lake and a plain. In the middle, looking almost like a sea, lies the great blue lake of ill-smelling water, which is very shallow and very salty. A broad, ugly strip of mud with a white crust of salt surrounds it, while beyond this, bending reeds form a green ring. Outside of the reeds lies a smooth plain, dotted with villages. This plain is green in the spring and brown all the rest of the year. The villages consist of flat-roofed mud houses like

those of Anatolia, and they are both dirty and bad-smelling. From a distance one does not see all this, and the villages look very attractive. They appear like great orchards of apricot, plum, peach, apple, and mulberry trees, with rows of tall poplars rising along the lines of the canals, which bring water. Each village is surrounded by smooth stretches of rich wheat fields, bright with scarlet poppies. On every side the plain is hemmed in by great mountains, the lower ones brown or only just tinted with green in spring, and the higher ones white with snow until far into the summer.

The Armenian Highlands. Upon the heights, on every side of the basins, the rolling hills and mountains are treeless. Nomads wander about in summer, living in black tents and herding their fat-tailed sheep. For many months in winter the country is buried in snow, and the shepherds go into the valleys and spend the cold season in houses made of stone or in huts half dug out of the ground. A traveler in this country was once told by his guide that he was approaching a Kurdish village. He looked around but could see no signs of houses; the only thing he noticed was a little patch on the hillside below him where the ground had been trampled. He began to ride across this, when suddenly a man came rushing out of a hole in the ground and shouted out, "Get off my roof, get off my roof! You'll break through and kill my family!" The house was wholly under ground, and the traveler had ridden right on to the roof.

The Diverse Races of Armenia. Two things are especially noticeable about the Armenian Plateau. First, it is much divided into small, almost inaccessible districts by the mountains and gorges; and second, there is a great difference between the ease with which people can make a living in the basins and in the higher regions.

Because it is divided into so many naturally separate parts, the plateau contains many different tribes and races with different customs and religions. There are Armenians, Nestorians, Persians, Turks, Kurds, Kizilbashs, and Yezidis. The Yezidis are strange people who are called "devil-worshippers." They are afraid to say the word "satan," because they believe that if they do he will harm them. In their villages it is a sin to spit, and any one who does it is in danger of being mobbed. Long ago they used to wear blue as the holy color; now they have changed and hate blue, while they think that white is the color pleasing to God. If these people lived in the plains, they would probably become much like their neighbors; but because they are shut away among the mountains, they keep their strange customs.

Where part of the people are prosperous and part poor, there is naturally much robbery. This is especially true where the government is weak. The Armenian Plateau is divided among three governments, the Russian, which is strong, and the Persian and the Turkish, which are weak. Two travelers had crossed a river one day and were sitting down in a village at noon to rest. The polite people, partly Armenians and partly Turks, brought out some quilts for the travelers to sit upon, and some sour milk, flat cakes of bread, and water-melons with yellow flesh and brown seeds for them to eat. As they sat in the shade of the mulberry trees beside the village spring a ragged shepherd, breathless and frightened, came running in from the hills. He hurried to a house where twenty soldiers were quartered, shouting excitedly.

At once the soldiers took their guns, mounted their horses, and rode rapidly off. The villagers also got out

their long, old-fashioned flintlock guns and went off in hot haste. At last some one stopped long enough to tell



A flock of sheep following their shepherd

the travelers what had happened. Five shepherds with four hundred sheep were out on the mountain side above the village. Suddenly twenty Kurds came down upon them, shot two shepherds, and drove off all the sheep. The other shepherds ran to the village. All the villagers and the soldiers had gone out to have a fight with the Kurds and get back the sheep. They did not succeed, for the Kurds simply crossed over the boundary from Turkey to Persia, and the Turkish soldiers could not follow them into another country.

Where Russia rules the Armenian Plateau there is not so much fighting and plundering; but even there it is hard to make the mountain people peaceable. In good years all is well, and the Turks, Armenians, Persians, and Nestorians of the plains would prosper if they were not too heavily taxed. In bad years, when the crops are poor or the sheep cannot get good pasture, the amount of robbery by the Kurds increases greatly.

CHAPTER IX

THE OIL FIELDS OF CAUCASIA

From Constantinople to Baku. The trade route from Europe to Persia or central Asia lies through the Russian province of Caucasia, north of the Armenian Plateau. Sailing from Constantinople, one lands at the fortified city of Batum at the eastern end of the Black Sea, and there takes the train. At first the railroad goes northward with the deep blue sea on the left and magnificent mountains on the right. There is much rain here where the west winds blow in from the



Porters or hamals in the streets of Batum

Black Sea, and the mountains are covered with splendid forests of pine, chestnut, maple, and other trees. At



*Plowing with a wooden plow drawn by buffaloes in Caucasias,
near Batum*

their base a thicket of rhododendron and azalea bushes fills the forest with the most wonderful pink, white, and yellow blossoms in the spring. Thirty miles north of Batum the railroad turns to the east, leaving the sea and entering a broad, rich valley. Far away to the north the snowy peaks of the Caucasus Mountains can be seen. Near at hand peasants dressed in odd, tight trousers and colored shirts are plowing the fertile fields with big, hairless water buffaloes. At every station the train makes a long halt among the trees, as is often the case in Russian territory, and boys and girls come running down the platform to sell bunches of flowers or little birch-bark baskets full of strawberries.

By and by, after many hours of traveling, the valley grows narrow and the railroad begins to wind. High up on a crag above the river one sees on this side or on that

an old castle built in the days when the Georgians ruled the land. Their feudal lords built strongholds here on the Rion River, just as the old German lords built castles on the Rhine. At length the train enters a long tunnel under a low mountain range which runs north from the Armenian Plateau to the Caucasus Mountains. On the eastern side of the tunnel a new kind of scenery appears. There are very few trees, for much of the rain brought by the westerly winds from the Black Sea is shut out by the mountains. A broad, grassy valley descends gently eastward between distant mountains, from which the streams all run toward the Caspian Sea. Famous Tiflis, the capital of Caucasia, is passed. It is disappointing because, although it is well built, it is not so interesting as one expects, and is much like many cities in Europe. As the train approaches the Caspian Sea the hillsides grow drier, villages become less frequent, and, finally, the country is almost a desert.

Oil as Fuel for Railroads. All the way from Batum a large pipe runs close to the railroad track. At first it does not occur to the traveler to connect this pipe with the facts that no cinders come from the engines and that there are no firemen shoveling coal. When the train stops to water the engine, one sometimes wonders why there are two pipes instead of one pouring liquid into the tender. The reason is that the engine burns petroleum, or crude oil. The large pipe beside the track carries it five hundred miles from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea, where ships take the oil and carry it all over the East. Baku is the greatest oil field in the world. We have much oil in America, but no single place here can begin to compare with this great Russian oil center. Almost a quarter of the world's oil comes from this one small region.

Baku and Its Surroundings. Baku is a dirty, disagreeable place, where there seems to be nothing but oil. The people all talk about nothing but oil, and everything smells of it. In many places houses are stained with it; the streets are often sticky with it; and wherever one goes the drinking water has upon its surface a little scum of oil.

Baku itself lies on the shore of the Caspian Sea in



In the oil fields at Baku

order to be near a harbor. The oil fields are a mile or two to the west and south. As one looks down upon Bibi-Eibat, south of Baku, he sees scores or hundreds of great, black pyramidal towers each of which marks an oil well. They suggest enormous black gravestones in a cemetery of giants. Down among them the streets are oozy with oil. Here and there along the roadside, women with buckets stand beside dirty pools and seem to be washing clothes in the filthy water. Really, they

are gathering the family supply of fuel. The pools are covered with oil, which floats because it is lighter than water. The women dip cloths into this surface layer, and when the cloths are soaked with oil it is squeezed out into the buckets. When a woman has collected a pailful she goes home and cooks dinner with it in a rough oil stove.

It is a poor plan to wear good clothes in the oil fields, for near the towers drops of oil are spattered in every direction. Greasy Persians, Turkomans, and Armenians are hard at work running machines which pump up the oil from deep wells, and put it into reservoirs or tanks. From these it is pumped into cars or ships or into pipe lines, or is fed into a distilling apparatus, where it is heated a little in order to separate it into different parts. This is the first process in making gasoline, kerosene, vaseline, aniline dyes, and various other most valuable products, all of which are derived from petroleum.

The Oil Deposits. A few million years ago the country where Baku now stands was part of the bottom of the sea. Great numbers of shellfish and seaweeds lived and died in the water. Their bodies gathered on the floor of the sea and were gradually covered by hundreds of feet of mud, sand, and ooze. After thousands and thousands of years the bottom of the sea was slowly raised and became land. Meanwhile, the dead plants and animals had gradually changed in chemical form and had been converted into petroleum and natural gas. These products, being very light in weight, gathered in certain places where the rock arched upward, and leaked to the surface through cracks. Thus men noticed them and, having at last discovered their use, began to hunt for larger supplies. They employed steam drills to bore

round holes deep into the rock, and up through the holes gas and oil came pouring with tremendous force. Some-



A watering cart at Batum

times the rush of gas was so violent that it shot the drill out like a bullet from a gun, and wrecked the machinery that was being used. Then oil mixed with sand was poured out in a huge fountain rising two hundred feet into the air. At Baku, in 1901, some fountains like this broke out and flooded whole villages with oil. It ran through the streets like water, and filled the lower parts of the houses, driving all the people away. Now and then such fountains, or "gushing wells," get on fire from lightning or some accident. No one can put them out, and they may burn for weeks, like the flaring torches of mighty giants.

The Water Supply. The vast amount of oil at Baku has caused a city of more than a hundred thousand

inhabitants to grow up. The region is so dry that there is not enough fresh water for so many people. All the little springs for many miles were first used, and then the inhabitants began to drink the water from the Caspian Sea. Of course the sea water is salty and undrinkable. To get rid of the salt the water is boiled and distilled, thus making it very pure. The only impurity is oil, which floats on the surface of the sea near Baku, and is so easily made into vapor that it rises with the steam of the water when this is boiled to free it from the salt. Baku is the only city in the world which uses distilled water. It would be enormously expensive if there were not so much oil close at hand to be used as cheap fuel.

Shipping the Oil. From Baku, oil is shipped to all parts of eastern Europe and Asia. Much is carried in steamers to the mouth of the Volga River, and there transferred to smaller boats to be carried up the river into the interior of Russia. The Volga has deposited so much silt at its mouth that the Caspian Sea is there very shallow, and large steamers must anchor several miles off shore. Accordingly, the river boats come out into sea to the anchorage. There, where the oil is transferred from the large craft to the small, a little town has grown up in the midst of the sea, almost out of sight of land. Merchants have anchored rafts in the shallow water, and all manner of trade goes on between the river boats and the Caspian steamers. The oil of Baku, after being buried under the rocks for hundreds of thousands of years, has now caused men to build two strange towns—a very large one which drinks sea water, and a small one in the midst of the sea itself.

CHAPTER X

THE WATERLESS LAND OF PERSIA

The Pleasant Aspect of Persia. Books about Persia give two very different impressions. Some describe the country as pleasant and beautiful. Others say that it is one of the saddest countries in the world. The writers who say that it is beautiful describe a city such as Ispahan. They say that the streets are filled with busy, happy people. Merchants sit cross-legged in tiny little stores, which are not at all like stores in America but merely small rooms about ten feet square, with one side completely open to the street. The merchant sits in the



Persian dervishes

middle, where he can reach almost everything without getting up. He smokes a great water pipe in which the smoke passes through a vase-like jar of water, bubbling merrily. The buyers stand in front of the shop and examine this thing and that.

Perhaps a man wants to buy one of the beautiful rugs for which Persia is famous. The merchant says the price is twenty dollars; the buyer says it is worth only four. They talk a long time, and say impolite things in loud voices, but no one minds that in the least. At length

the merchant says, "Well, to please you, because you are one of my dearest friends, I will sell the rug for fifteen dollars, although I paid sixteen for it. I would rather die than sell it any cheaper." The buyer answers, "I will give you ten dollars for it, because I love you. Ten dollars is all the money I have, and I could not pay another cent if you were to whip me all day to make me."

As they cannot agree, the buyer goes away. For an hour or two he wanders among the donkeys, mules, horses, and camels which fill the narrow streets of the market place or bazaar. Then he comes back to the rug man. "I will give you eleven dollars," he says. "Fourteen; not a penny less," is the reply. They talk a little longer, and at last the rug is sold for twelve dollars and a half. The merchant sends his boy out to a little shop across the street to get some tiny glasses full of tea. When it comes he offers some to the buyer, and insists on putting lump after lump of sugar into it; for the more sugar put in, the more polite is the host considered. Neither man seems to feel at all ashamed of the fact that he has told a dozen out-and-out lies. That is the way business is done in Persia and in most parts of Southwestern Asia. The merchant really bought the rug for eleven dollars. He has finally sold it at a fair price. The Persians are never in a hurry, but like to spend time in bargaining, and they seem to enjoy arguing about the price of things.

If the merchant sells one or two rugs in a day he is satisfied. He goes home early to a pleasant, white-washed house where his two wives live. In front of it his children are playing under some tall poplar trees beside a pool of water. "Come," he says to them, let's go and water the garden." To do it, he opens a pipe at the bottom of the square pool. The water then flows out

into a little ditch and runs away past some rose bushes to a garden full of onions, lettuce, melons, cucumbers, beets, and all sorts of fine vegetables. Here it spreads into many small channels, so that water soon stands in every part of the garden. The children take off their shoes, which are like slippers, and wade around in the mud, turning the water first into one little ditch and then into another. They do not wear any stockings. Then the father takes a spade and shovels up some mud, so as to turn the water into another ditch. In this it flows off to a vineyard full of splendid vines, and to an orchard of fruit trees—peaches, apricots, plums, nectarines, mulberries, pears, and apples. It is all very pleasant and delightful.

The Unpleasant Aspect of Persia. Another traveler tells a different story of the very same region. "Near Ispahan," he says, "I found many of the houses in the villages deserted. Half the shops in the city were closed. The people looked thin, sick, and hungry. Many of them were too weak to walk. Children were out in the fields gathering weeds and grasses which had grown up in the few days since the spring rain began. They brought them home, and the sick mothers cooked them. That was all that many families had to eat. For a year or more they had scarcely had a good meal. Many had died, and many had gone away. The rest were living, as best they could, in the hope that this year the crops would not fail, as they had for the last few years. Day after day the people prayed for rain. If rain came, they might be able to live. If it did not come, they would all die."

The Lack of Rain in Persia. Both travelers described the country correctly. Lack of rain is the cause of Persia's poverty; and it is one of the chief reasons why

the country is not well ruled, and why its people are often discontented and want to change their form of



A village among the mountains of Persia

government. Persia, like most of the countries which we have been studying, has a very long dry season in summer and a rainy season in the winter and early spring. Even in good years the amount of rain is small, because of the mountains which surround the country. From the Armenian Plateau two mountain systems branch out. One bends a little to the south and forms the boundary between Southwestern Asia and Northern Asia, and the other bends far to the south and skirts the Indian Ocean. The two join again at the Pamirs. Between them lies the great basin of Iran. The western part of the basin forms the larger part of Persia, and the eastern Afghanistan and Balúchistán. All of it is extremely dry; and the places that have most water are near the highest mountains. Wherever there is

water, cities and villages are located, but where there is no water the country is a desert. When the winter rain is fairly abundant the people live easily and are happy. When the rain is scanty the crops fail and the Persians starve. In the dry years it is very hard to pay taxes, and the poor people begin to hate the government which demands them.

The Habitable Parts of Persia. The best part of Persia, and the section where most of the people live, is the northwest, which includes a portion of the well-watered Armenian Plateau. Another place which the Persians call good, although we should call it very dry and poor, is the mountainous region of Khorassan in the northeast. The north slope of the Elburz Mountains, near the Caspian Sea, is very fertile, as we saw in the first chapter. Indeed, it has almost too much water. All the rest of Persia is dry, and the center is a vast, uninhabitable desert.

Modes of Travel: "Serais." In the drier regions it is very hard to travel, for water can be found only at intervals of from ten to thirty miles. In order to make it easier for caravans, rich men often build large buildings called "serais" or "caravanserais," and give them to the public; just as men in America found colleges or endow hospitals for the benefit of all the people. A serai is a sort of public hotel, made usually of brick, and located sometimes in a desert and sometimes in a town. In the middle a great open court is surrounded on two or three sides by a platform divided into many sections. Behind each section there is a small, dark room. The other side is given up to large, windowless stables. One corner is devoted to a cistern, where the water of a spring is carefully conserved. When a caravan comes in at night the tired men take possession of any rooms that

happen to be empty, and put their horses, donkeys, and camels in the stable, or else leave them in the courtyard. They bring food with them both for themselves and their animals in many cases, for there is often nothing to be bought if a serai is located in the desert. In the morning the caravans start early, while it is cool; and often they travel by night to avoid the heat. No one pays anything for the use of the serais, except in the large cities, and every man has a right to use them.

The Deserts of Eastern Persia. The southeastern corner of Persia, where it joins Balúchistán and Afghanistan, contains a well-populated district called Seistan. To get there one must ride a month or two on camels or horses from the north of Persia. Part of the time the way is over salt plains, and part of the time among mountains. The mountains have no trees and grass



A caravanserai in a village in eastern Persia

like those of eastern America. Their surface is bare, splintered rock. If ever they had any soil it has all



Tents of nomads pitched beside a well in a desert in eastern Persia

been washed away by occasional rains in winter. The only water is found in small brooks or springs, some of which are so salty that after drinking one feels more thirsty than before. The streams do not flow far, for at the base of the mountains the water all sinks into great deposits of gravel.

If Americans were set down in such a land they would say that it was impossible to live there, and would move away. The people of Iran, however, have learned to use even this poor country. Here and there a miserable mud-walled little village is located beside a spring in the midst of the desert, or nomads pitch their low, black tents beside a well. In the east of Persia the nomads are either fierce Baluchis or Afghans with dark skins and dark hair, which the men smear with grease and wear long over their ears. The young men, who want to be in style, mix up a paste of charcoal and put it around their eyes to make them look black and, as they think, beautiful. The only work of the nomads is to care for their sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys, which

manage to pick up a scanty living where our sleek American animals would starve. The nomads live largely on the milk of their cattle. For a month or two they camp at a wretched little spring, until all the scattered bits of grass are eaten; then they move off to another, and set up their tents again.

The Nomadic Tribes of Seistan. In May, soon after the beginning of the dry season, there is almost no grass left for the nomads, and many of the springs begin to disappear or become very small and bitter. The nomads who live in the middle of eastern Persia take their flocks and tents and, leaving the mountains, cross a great, sloping plain of bare gravel. This plain is like an enormous beach twenty miles wide or more. As the nomads descend, the air grows hotter and hotter. At length they find themselves on the edge of a bluff from which they look down upon the vast plain of Seistan. Here, spread out before them, they see a great lake as long as Lake Champlain and much wider. It is very shallow, only about ten feet deep in the middle. Once some Englishmen brought a little sailboat to the lake, and were much frightened when a high wind threatened to upset them. At last a sudden gust tipped everybody out into the water five or six miles from shore. They all began to swim, but were much surprised when their feet touched the bottom, and they found that the water was only three feet deep.

There is no more rain in Seistan than in the other parts of eastern Persia; but a great river, the Helmand, comes hundreds of miles from the snowy Hindu Kush Mountains, and here forms a lake. The lake is surrounded by swampy tracts covered with wiry grass, or with great reeds ten or fifteen feet high. The nomads prefer the grassy places; for there they can find both

water and grass—the two things which make life possible for their animals and for themselves. It is clear



A group of Fowlers before a reed house. The woman is spinning

that if people are going to live at all in the mountains around the lake of Seistan they must be nomads who depend on their flocks and herds.

The Fowlers of Seistan. In addition to the Baluchi and Afghan nomads there are two other kinds of people in Seistan—the Sayids, or Fowlers, and the real Seistanis, who are farmers. The Fowlers are a people who have adapted themselves to living among the great reed beds which border a large part of the lake. Following a narrow muddy path among the tall reeds, one suddenly comes to an opening where everything has been cut down. In the middle stands a group of houses and

stables, made wholly of reeds. In building the stables the reeds are simply tied into big bundles and set up like a close fence. Then other bundles are tied to these in such a way that they slope inward a little. That is all. There is no roof, and it takes only a day for one man to make a large stable, with no tool except his clumsy knife. He does not even need any rope, for he uses the leaves of the reeds instead, twisting them into strings.

When a house is to be made the process is almost the same, except that a few poles are set up in the middle, and bundles of reeds are supported on them to form a roof. Sometimes the people weave large pieces of reed matting and bend this up into arches to make houses. Both this and the other kind of house are easy to make, and the Fowlers think nothing of leaving an old house and building a new one somewhere else.

In a few places the Fowlers have small fields on the edge of the swamp, but most of their living comes from two kinds of animals which feed among the reeds. The animals are cows and birds. The cows, which have humps on their shoulders, are small and run half wild. Each Fowler knows his own animals, and gathers them together at certain times. The cows eat nothing but reeds, which are very hard and tough after they turn brown in the fall. In order to get rid of the old stalks, the Fowlers burn the swamp in January and February, and thus give the young green shoots a chance to grow. When the government sends its officers to collect taxes, the Fowlers have a habit of turning all their animals out into the thickest part of the swamp. They then go off themselves so that no one can find them. They have headmen who govern them with almost no reference to the rest of Persia.

When the birds from Siberia and the northern parts of Asia go south in winter, many of the waterfowl gather at



Two Fowlers on a canoe or raft of reeds on the shallow waters of lake of Seistan

Seistan. The water of the lake is covered with thousands upon thousands of ducks and geese. Pelicans with huge bags under their beaks and swans with long, graceful necks swim in the water, while long-legged snipe and other less common birds run about on the water's edge. In order to catch them, the Fowlers make heavy, clumsy rafts by tying bundles of reeds into the form of solid canoes. The raftsmen very seldom use paddles, for the water is so shallow that they can pole themselves to all parts of the lake. Every day during the winter most of the men of the village go out to catch birds, starting usually at sunset—two sturdy-limbed, blue-coated men on each yellow raft. Slowly, through the purple shadows of evening, they scatter here and there along the reedy borders of the lake. First

one and then another disappears among the reeds, where they enter narrow channels only five or six feet wide. Across these they spread nets supported on sticks in such a way that, when a string is pulled, the nets will fall. Then hiding themselves among the reeds, the men wait until a sleepy bird comes swimming along. The bird strikes the unseen net, the men pull the string, the net falls, and it is caught. In this way a single Fowler may get hundreds of birds every season, and on these he and his family live. These people believe that the lake and the reeds belong entirely to them. If anyone else puts a boat or raft on the lake, they go by night and destroy it. Their life is as dependent upon the water and the reeds as that of the nomads is upon the water and the grass.

The Farmers of Seistan. The majority of the people of Seistan are farmers. Their home is the plain outside the swamp. Its soil is as good as that of our prairies, but the country is so dry that nothing can grow without irrigation. Every fall, when the Helmand River is very low, the governor of Seistan gathers hundreds of men from the villages and sets them at work to make a dam. They cut enormous quantities of tamarisks—a kind of bush ten or twelve feet high. These they tie into big bundles and throw into the river, weighting them down with stones. In this way they build a large dam, and turn the river out of its bed into a great number of canals or ditches, which run over the plain in various directions. From the canals the water is made to flow out over the fields and moisten them.

As the water often stands on a field for many days in winter, the ground becomes soaked, and the paths which serve as roads become so soft that a man on foot may sink to his knees in mud. Where the paths cross canals

there are no bridges, unless the canals happen to be so deep that the water comes above a man's waist. Accordingly, the natives are constantly obliged to wade, even in winter, and therefore suffer greatly from rheumatism.

Seistan is so warm that the people begin to plant the crops in February and to reap them in April. During the time when the crops are growing the river furnishes a fair supply of water, and almost all of it is turned on to the fields. In April the river begins to rise, because the snow is melting at its source far away to the northeast, on the high Hindu Kush Mountains. In May and June the water rises much higher, until there is a flood that washes away the main dam completely. The people do not care, because most of the crops have already been harvested. In the fall they will make another dam, just as they have done for centuries. They do not know how to build dams which will last from year to year.

Effects of Climate and Physiography. Seistan is not a pleasant place in which to live. During the four hottest months a tremendous north wind blows day and night. Europeans who have lived there in tents say that the flapping and snapping of the cloth and ropes make such a noise that one person cannot hear another talk. Out of doors it is almost impossible to see, because one's eyes are so completely filled with dust. Yet the people do not want the wind to stop, for when it dies down the air becomes full of mosquitoes, flies, and gnats from the swamps; and life then is almost unendurable. The wind is so strong that trees cannot grow unless they are protected by enormous mud walls. So there are no orchards, although the people need fruit very much in hot weather. They have no kind of fruit except watermelons, which, of course, grow on the ground. Since trees cannot grow, the houses are built

wholly of mud, even the roofs being constructed of mud bricks built into domes. The only houses not made wholly of mud are found in the tamarisk swamps near the river. There an arch of tamarisk poles is daubed with mud, making a very simple sort of house.

Animals suffer greatly in Seistan during the summer. The swamps breed a species of fly whose bite is fatal to horses. Dogs are attacked by a common disease which either kills them or leaves them blind. The jackals which infest the tamarisk jungle in large numbers sometimes go mad in the heat of summer, and bite not only one another, but dogs, horses, and even men. Camels are the best kind of beast of burden in Seistan, but they have terrible diseases. A few years ago a British official party went to Seistan to settle the boundary between Persia and Afghanistan. They had twelve hundred camels. Half of the animals died in about a year from a disease resembling influenza. Sometimes thirty or forty died in a day. The Seistanis are so poor that they quarreled eagerly with one another to get even the wretched meat of these animals that had died of a contagious disease.

In Seistan, more than in most places, it is evident that the people live in certain ways because of their peculiar relations to climate, mountains, rivers, lakes, and plains. In the first place, there is no rain in summer and very little in winter. In the second place, there are high mountains far away in Afghanistan which supply water for a large river. In the third place, the river comes to an end in a very shallow lake surrounded by a flat plain outside of which there are low, dry mountains. Close to the lake there are reedy marshes. Therefore, we have three kinds of people: The nomads, who live in the dry mountains as long as they can but must

come to the lake in the hot summer; the Fowlers, who live in the marshes and get their living from the lake; and the true Seistanis, who live on the plain and make a living by using the water of the Helmand River to water their crops. The three kinds of people live close to one another; but they are very different because each kind has adapted its way of life to a certain kind of surroundings.

CHAPTER XI

AFGHANISTAN: THE "BUFFER STATE"

On the Frontier. Some British officers were at breakfast one spring morning at the military club at Pesháwar, in the northwest corner of India. "Have you heard the news?" said a captain, who had just come in. "The Afghan tribesmen have crossed the border again. They burned a village last night and drove off two hundred horses. I hear they are making raids in other places, too, and I fear it means another war in those awful mountains. That is the worst place on earth in which to attack an enemy, who does nothing but run up into the tops of the hills and shoot down on the people below in the valley."

At the same time some Russian officers were talking in Merv, six hundred miles away to the northwest, in the Russian province of Transcaspia. A major was speaking: "They say the Afghans have built a new dam across the Heri-Rud, near Herat. They have turned off most of the water of the river, and the people at Tejeñ cannot get enough to keep their crops alive. I fear we shall have to teach those Afghans another lesson. They are bad people to fight with, but we can't have them cut off our water supply."

We generally think of Afghanistan as a little country. It looks small on the map, but it is larger than either France or Germany. The number of inhabitants, however, is small — only four or five million, or less than a tenth as many as Germany has. The Afghans are not rich; they have not much trade, and their country is not particularly desirable. Yet, as the conversation of the

English and Russian officers shows, England and Russia both dread the possibility of quarreling with them, and



A Baluchi minstrel and his boys beside a hut of reed matting on the border of Afghanistan

have tried in every way to keep on good terms with Afghanistan.

The Boundaries of Afghanistan. The boundaries of Afghanistan make much trouble. The Suláiman Mountains, the eastern boundary, rise steeply on the Indian side, where they are uninhabitable and hard to traverse. At their base lie the rich villages of the plains of India. On the Afghan side the mountains assume the form of a plateau which is quite easy to traverse and is inhabited by a scanty population of warlike nomads, who like to make raids. If the mountains were high enough or were cold enough to be uninhabitable, they would form a good boundary. As it is, England cannot protect the people of India unless she rules the mountains and keeps the Afghan tribes in order. But she does

not want to do this. She wants to keep Afghanistan as an independent country, or "buffer state," as it is called, between herself and Russia. England has even promised not to interfere with the Afghans, but their mountainous country makes them so warlike that she cannot help herself. Either she must let them plunder all they choose, or keep them in order by force.

On the north the boundary of Afghanistan is also a source of trouble. There is not much raiding and plundering there, but difficulties arise because the boundary cuts right across the rivers after they leave the mountains. In these dry regions a river is the most valuable of all possessions to a country. Without it life is impossible. The oases of Tejeñ, Merv, and Khiva, ruled by Russia, get their water from rivers which rise in Afghanistan and flow north. In dry years the Afghans are wont to take more than their share of water, and leave the oases to suffer. Of course, that makes the people hate Afghanistan. Russia has to protect her subjects, and to try to make the Afghans leave the water alone.

The western boundary of Afghanistan suffers from a similar difficulty. The oasis of Seistan is divided between the Afghans and the Persians. The boundary is supposed to be the course of the main stream of the Helmand River. The Helmand, however, like all rivers flowing through deltas, has a habit of changing its course near its mouth. When this happens the Persians and the Afghans both claim the land between the old channel and the new. They also quarrel because each side accuses the other of taking more than its share of water for irrigation. On the whole, the boundaries of Afghanistan are such that Afghanistan is in constant danger of quarreling with England, Russia, and Persia.

The Afghan Plateaus. The larger part of Afghanistan consists of the great plateaus and lofty mountains which



Afghan women making bread. They heat stones in the fire, spread the dough upon them, then replace them in the hot ashes until the bread is baked

occupy the north-central and eastern part of the country. Here the whole of a great district, five hundred miles long from east to west and two hundred miles wide, lies at an elevation of nearly a mile above the sea. In many places large areas lie at heights of eight thousand or ten thousand feet, while the higher peaks rise to fifteen thousand or even twenty thousand feet. In such a region there is naturally much rain and snow, and it is very cold in winter. Even in summer it is so cool that crops can be raised profitably only in the more favored valleys. There is much good grass, however, and therefore the people have a great many flocks and live largely on milk. Most of them have low houses of stone and mud for use in winter; but in the summer they leave these and live in tents, wandering from place

to place with the flocks. The mountains are so high that it is not easy to cross the main ranges. Therefore, the people of one valley, or small plateau, do not have much to do with those of another. So the Afghans are divided into clans or tribes, as were the inhabitants of Scotland a few centuries ago; and the people of the various tribes are not very friendly with one another.

The Afghan Farming Country. The best part of Afghanistan is on the edges of the central plateau region. There the mountains descend gradually to broad plains of gravel. Deep valleys have been cut into them by rivers, such as the Helmand and Heri-Rud; and in these valleys at a height of from two to five thousand feet or more above the sea, lie many prosperous villages. Among the low mountains, fair valleys are filled with orchards and gardens; while out on the edge of the surrounding plain, patches of green fields surround the mud villages of prosperous farmers. No rain falls in summer except a few showers on the higher mountains, and the hillsides are parched and bare. But in many places this does no special harm, for the rivers, coming from the snowy highlands, supply abundant water for irrigation.

In some places, however, where there are no rivers, it is not so easy to get water. In Afghanistan, as in Persia, the villagers often dig tunnels for miles through the gravel at the foot of the mountains. The tunnels slope a little so that water runs down them, but they do not slope so steeply as the surface of the ground. Thus, as a tunnel is followed upward, it gets deeper and deeper under ground, even though it rises a little. In this way it penetrates deep layers of gravel which are full of water. In digging the tunnels it is necessary to sink wells every fifty or a hundred feet, in

order to have some way of lifting the earth out from the tunnel to the surface. Where there are many "kanats," as the tunnels are called, the whole plain around a village is dotted with piles of earth arranged in long lines around the mouths of the wells. Every year or two the tunnels have to be cleaned out. To do this, windlasses are set up over the wells and men are let down with bags, into which they shovel the earth



Villagers digging a well in a gravelly plain on the border of Afghanistan

that has fallen in. Often they find hundreds of harmless water snakes curled up in the little brooks at the bottom of the tunnels.

Afghan Raids. Poor people frequently envy those who are richer than themselves. Accordingly, the Afghans of the mountains envy their neighbors in the prosperous lower villages. As the mountaineers have never learned to work, and as they are in the habit of moving easily from place to place, it seems to them quite natural and right to plunder the lowlanders. They regard a raid as part of the work of making a living.

In this way they have become very warlike; and as the villagers on the edges of the mountains have to protect themselves, they, too, are good fighters. When the Afghans carry their raids across the border into India, it makes great trouble for the English government, as we learned from the conversation of the officers at Pesháwar.

The Wild Siah-Posh Tribes. The far northeast corner of Afghanistan is inhabited by people called Siah-Posh, who carry the warlike character of mountaineers to its extreme development. They are pagans, who have been driven by Mohammedan conquerors into the most remote and barren parts of the mountains. Naturally, they hate their conquerors. Living where none but the hardiest can survive, they glory in enduring cold and hunger, and count it creditable to go around with one arm naked in bitter winter weather. All men except those of their own immediate valleys are enemies to them. No young man can take a wife until he has killed at least three or four of the hated Mohammedans.

The Route from Europe to India. Aside from its poor boundaries and warlike people, there is another thing which compels England and Russia to pay a great deal of attention to Afghanistan. From the Black Sea on the west almost to the Pacific Ocean — five thousand miles away on the east — the continent of Asia, as we have seen, is divided into sections by very high mountains. No railroads have yet been built across the mountains, and it is probable that only a few ever will be built. The slopes are too steep, and the expense of building roads and of running trains would be too great. On the western border of Afghanistan, however, there is a low place where a railroad could cross the mountains very easily, without climbing to an elevation of more than two

or three thousand feet. Hundreds of thousands or, perhaps, a million years ago, a great break took place in the earth's crust along the line which is now followed by the boundary between Afghanistan and Persia. Little by little the country on the Afghan side sank. Each time that the earth sank a few inches or a foot, a great earthquake doubtless occurred. Then a period of quiet ensued, to be followed after some years by another movement and earthquake. Thus the Afghan side of the break, or fault as it is called, fell slowly for hundreds of thousands of years, until now it is several thousand feet lower than the Persian side. The Heri-Rud flows in the northern part of the low place on the Afghan side of the fault, and the lake of Seistan lies in the southern part. Along this line it is easy to travel. Some day a railroad will be built here, and then this will be much the quickest way from Europe to India.

The trade of India is extremely large and valuable, and England would be very sorry to have it turned from her to some other country. Therefore, she is eager that such a railroad should be under her control. Many Englishmen do not want it, because if it were built a great amount of trade would go to Russia. Already, however, the English have completed a railroad across the Suláiman Mountains in India to the eastern border of Afghanistan, near Kandahar, and the Russians have built one to the other border, near Herat. Some day the two will join.

The Route from Russia to the Sea. To Russia the low place in the mountains on the west side of Afghanistan is very important also. Her population is growing fast, and manufacturing is developing rapidly. Her leaders desire to develop trade. For this, harbors are needed. All her harbors are either on the cold northern seas,

where ice prevents shipping for six months or more, or else they are on inclosed seas like the Baltic and the Black, where other nations hold the outlet and can block her if they choose. There are just three places where Russia can easily reach an outlet to a warm ocean. One is at the western end of Asia. There she has tried to get possession of Constantinople and the Bosphorus, but England has prevented her. Another is in Manchuria, where she took Port Arthur, which she had to give up after the war with Japan. The third is across Afghanistan. If Russia could build a railroad straight across that country to a port on the Indian Ocean, it would help her wonderfully. It is not strange that both England and Russia consider Afghanistan of so much political importance.

Balúchistán. South of Afghanistan lies the little country of Balúchistán. It is part of the basin region of Iran, but is governed by the English in India. It is a dry, desolate land, like the desert portions of Afghanistan and Persia. Part of its inhabitants live in small oases among the barren mountains. The remainder are nomads who wander far and wide with their flocks. Formerly the Baluchis were great plunderers. Their raids were so bad that the Indian government was obliged to put a stop to them. Thus it came to pass that Balúchistán passed under the rule of England.

CHAPTER XII

TRANSCASPIA AND RUSSIAN TURKISTAN

The Plains of Northern Asia. Having finished our study of Southwestern Asia, we are now ready to begin Northern Asia — the land of plains. Russian Turkistan and Transcaspia form the southern portion of Northern Asia. This part is not very different from northern Persia and the other countries which we have studied south of the mountains. Like them it is extremely dry. Except in the far northeast the rain or snow all comes in spring or winter, and the long summer is rainless. Therefore, the manner of life of the people resembles that of the other lands which we have studied. Water here is the most important of all things to farmers, nomads, and every sort of people. They talk about it even more earnestly than we talk about the weather. If there is plenty of water, they prosper; if there is little, they starve. All the people are Mohammedans, with the exception of a few Russians who have lately come in. It is an interesting fact that Mohammedanism is strong only in countries that are dry. The Mohammedans of moist countries, like some parts of India and China, are not greatly devoted to their own religion. On the contrary, they carry on many of the practices of the other religions around them.

The Caspian Sea. One way in which to reach Russian Turkistan is to sail down the great Volga River in Russia, and then take a steamer around the Caspian Sea to Krasnovodsk on the east side. First, the great plains of Russia are traversed, flat and uninteresting, and a little

too dry to be rich like the prairies of the Central West. Then the snowy Caucasus Mountains are passed, and the ship comes to oily Baku. Here the country is drier than to the north, but farther south a change soon appears. Winds blowing from the north and northwest across the Caspian bring much moisture and deposit it, as we have seen, upon the high slopes of the Elburz. So the Persian provinces of Ghilan and Mazanderan on the south side of the sea are thickly covered with splendid forests, and the scenery is as fine as any in the world. Along the shore long sand bars inclose still, shallow lagoons. Behind them lie the green forested lower slopes of the mountains, which, in the far background, merge gradually into the dim blue range of the Elburz, the snowy tops of which rise two or three miles above the sea. Farther around, on the east coast in Russian territory, the land again becomes low and very dry, drier than any other part of the shore.

The Transcaspian Railway. At Krasnovodsk the steamer goes in behind a long yellow sand spit, and ties up at a dock in front of a bare little town made up of low white houses. There is not enough water for trees, and only the governor and one or two rich people can have gardens. Here, as at Baku, most of the vegetables and fruit are brought by steamer from the moist southern shore. At the railroad station a broad train is waiting. It has four kinds of cars, first, second, third, and fourth class. First and second-class cars are very comfortable. They are used by foreigners, by the richer Russians, and by a very few natives. The third-class cars are very crowded, and the people who use them are mostly poor Russians and ordinary natives. The fourth-class cars look like freight cars. They are marked on the outside, "Eight horses or forty men." Crowds of Mohammedans, with

big white turbans and long gowns of red, blue, yellow, brown, or purple cotton, squeeze into them, with now and then a woman bundled up in dark blue or gray cloth. Her face is wholly covered, and she can see only through a piece of very thick, hot veiling over her eyes. The fourth-class cars are divided into two stories, made by a floor put through the middle of the low car. Of course no one can stand upright. There are no seats. The people merely crowd in and sit on either the upper or the lower floor on cushions or mattresses which they bring with them. In summer it is fearfully hot, and there are no windows; but the passengers do not seem to object



Turkoman soldiers saluting.

even when the cars are very crowded. The fare is the lowest in the world, scarcely half a cent a mile.

By and by a soldier in uniform rings a bell once. The newcomer from America hurries to his seat, thinking that the train is going to start. The natives, however, do not move, except to go off for another cup of tea. After a few minutes the soldier rings the bell twice, and people take their seats. Then he rings it three times, but

the train does not start. A few late comers enter the cars, but no one hurries. Next, the conductor blows



A halt at a station on the Transcaspian Railway. The man in the foreground is filling his teapot with hot water from a samovar

a little whistle, the engineer blows the big whistle of the engine, then the conductor blows the little one again, and at last the train begins to move. For a while it runs along with the smooth Caspian Sea on the right side and high, barren hills on the left. Then, after some hours, it comes out upon a dry, bare plain of sand and gravel.

Now and then the train stops at a little station. There is nothing to be seen except a few mulberry and apricot trees, a tank for water, another tank for the oil which the engine burns, and the small houses where live some Russian soldiers and their wives. Half a dozen native Turkomans stand around dressed in long gowns made of red silk in narrow stripes. On their feet are low shoes like slippers, and on their heads huge grenadier caps of sheepskin, white, black, or brown. Two or three tall, thin horses are tied to the station fence; while a few gaunt, hairless camels lie on the ground, chewing their cud, and

turning their great heads on every side to see what is going on. Often one or two round-cheeked Russian women or children stand behind samovars—great copper urns of water kept boiling by charcoal burning in a pipe in the middle. At the sight of the steaming samovars scores of passengers take the teapots, which everyone carries, and hurry out to fill them. They pay half a cent or a cent for the hot water, and then come back to the train and make tea. The natives drink their tea from bowls, and the Russians from glasses. Children as well as grown people drink enormous quantities. At some of the larger stations there are little houses with signs on them saying, "Boiling water." The passengers almost fight to get a chance to put their teapots under the hot-water faucet.

Transcaspia: Floods and Sand Dunes. On the second day from Krasnovodsk the slow-moving train runs near the foot of the mountains of northern Persia. In the distance the mountains can be seen several miles away to the south, rising in gray or brown slopes to an even crest-line. Between them and the railroad lies a sloping plain of gravelly deposits brought down by the streams. Along the line of the railroad occasional oases are strung like beads on a string. On the north side, away from the mountains, lies a great sandy desert, the beginning of the vast plain which stretches away two thousand miles to the Arctic Ocean.

On the gently sloping plain at the base of the mountains one notices everywhere low embankments, like enormous Y's which have been laid flat upon the ground. The stem of each Y points away from the railroad, and each branch is half a mile or more in length. Between every pair of Y's, there is a bridge. When the streams come down from the mountains they carry a very

heavy load of sand, gravel, and cobblestones. At the foot of the mountains they begin to flow less steeply, and so cannot carry so great a load. Therefore, they deposit the cobbles and gravel, and block their own channels, thus turning the streams into new courses across the gently sloping plain. No one can tell when the streams will turn, nor in what direction they will go in the next flood. They may leave their old channels and flow against the railroad, and if there is no bridge the track may be washed away. Hence the Russians have built the Y's. When a flood comes it must hit some part of a Y, no matter where it goes. It is then turned aside and follows an embankment to a space between two Y's, where there is a bridge.

The larger rivers cannot be controlled in this way. One year in May some Americans wanted to go to Samarkand. They reached Askhabad, and were told they would have to wait three weeks till the flood of the Heri-Rud or Tejen River was over and the railroad rebuilt. When they finally came near the river, the train ran for four or five miles along a low embankment, with water stretching away on every side as far as they could see. The flood was not nearly so high as it had been, but the country was still like a great lake. At length the track came to an end, and they got out on a low, flimsy wooden bridge which had just been made. It was only wide enough for a plank walk. Beside it lay an engine turned over on its side and half buried in mud and water. It had gone too far on the track, which was undermined by the flood, and had tumbled into the water. All the passengers were obliged to walk for half a mile across the main part of the river on the bridge of plank. At the same time their baggage was carried over on the backs of Turkomans and Persians. It is

odd that in so dry a land floods should make the greatest of all difficulties for railroads.

Not many miles beyond the river the railroad meets quite another difficulty. Between the oases of Tejeñ and Merv it goes through the driest sort of desert, where large piles of dry sand, called dunes, are blown about by the wind. Sometimes a strong wind blows the sand in thick drifts right over the railroad track, and no



Tents of nomadic Turkomans pitched in the wind-swept desert

trains can run until it has been shoveled off. It seems as if it would be easy to prevent this, but it is not. The only thing that seems to do any good is to cultivate certain desert bushes along the sides of the road. It is very hard, however, to get them started; and even if this can be done they grow very slowly, because they can get so little water.

The Turkomans of the Desert. In the early spring the sandy desert is beautiful. A little rain falls during the last part of the winter, and in April a great deal of

grass springs up. Then the Turkomans rejoice. They go out with their camels, sheep, and horses far into the



*Turkomans in the desert drawing water from a well
for their flocks*

sand and camp for a month or two beside deep wells. Day by day the flocks are driven out to feed on the rich grass, and every night are brought back to the wells to be watered. For hours a nomad boy or girl stands by each well, letting down a sheepskin bag by means of a long rope running on a little wooden pulley. All over the desert at intervals of from five to twenty miles there are wells. Often the Turkomans dig eight or ten wells close together. The first one is dug to a depth of perhaps a hundred feet, and when water is found it may prove too salty for drinking purposes. However, the Turkomans do not give up. They dig first one well and then another, and at last get one which has water that can be drunk.

During the thirty years or more since the coming of the Russians and the building of the railroad the

Turkomans have wholly changed their way of living. In the old days most of them were nomads. Now a large part of them have settled down in the fertile oases, because new ways of irrigation have made it possible for many more people to live there, and because the coming of the railroad has made new opportunities for them to work and earn a living.

Before the days of the Russians the Turkomans used to be very much like the Arabs. They belong to a wholly different race, but because they lived in the same kind of desert they acquired the same habits. When they were hungry or restless, some Turkoman would set up his spear in the ground and say, "After two days I am going on a raid in Persia. Who will go with me?" Then the young men and some of the older ones would gather, and a company of twenty or thirty start out. On their thin, tough horses they might ride a hundred miles in a single day. Suddenly they would appear near a Persian village at sunset, when the villagers were coming home from the fields. The poor Persians would run to the mud towers which dot their fields, but many could not get to them. These the Turkomans seized. In the village they stole whatever they could find and then set on fire the straw at the threshing floors. They could not burn the houses, because those are built of mud. Taking the men, women, and children whom they had captured, they tied their hands together and drove them off at the point of the spear, compelling the captives to walk for many days. Many of them were sold to merchants and to others in the rich oases of Merv, Khiva, and Bukhara.

Now all this raiding and stealing has come to an end; but when hard times come, the Turkomans begin to say, "We must go and plunder the Persians. Why

do the Russians not let us do it? How are we going to get food for our families if we cannot rob our enemies?"



The home of a Russian official in the oasis of Merv

Locusts. In Russian Turkistan, as in all dry countries, grasshoppers of the kind called locusts often devour the crops. In April the eggs begin to hatch. Here and there little black spots appear, swarming with thousands of tiny grasshoppers no bigger than the point of a lead pencil. Little by little the spots spread, as the grasshoppers grow bigger. Often the people try to kill the insects, but cannot because there are so many. After a few weeks the whole country is spotted with round bare patches where the locusts have eaten up all the fresh spring grass. Then there comes a day when the insects begin to move, for they have grown large quickly, and are very hungry.

Straight away they go, stopping for nothing, and always hopping forward in the same direction. If they come to a ditch, they jump in. The people therefore

dig ditches, and in this way they catch many and bury them. But the others keep on. If the locusts come to a brook flowing to a little oasis, they jump in. Many are drowned, but many more swim across and, as soon as their wings become dry, press onward. They come like a vast moving army, hopping, hopping, hopping. When they reach a tent they never think of turning aside, but crawl right up the sides; and if the round top is open they tumble down inside, and, turning in the right direction, go on again.

Behind them there is nothing left except bare, brown earth and a few tough stalks. All the grain, the leaves of the trees, and everything else that is green, is eaten up. The poor Turkomans wring their hands, but can do nothing. Their only hope is that the starlings—large birds with black wings and rosy breasts—may come and eat up the locusts before everything is gone and the people are left to starve.

The Great Oases of Russian Turkistan. East of Transcaspia and the sandy desert the mountains to the south, in Afghanistan and the Pamirs, grow higher and the rivers larger. Therefore, the oases become richer, more fruitful, and more densely populated. The city of Samarkand occupies a typical oasis of Russian central Asia. The railroad station is far from the town. There are no street cars, but carriages can be hired very cheaply. One horse, with a great wooden arch over his back, is in the shafts, and another is fastened loosely to the carriage, outside the shafts. The drivers are mostly Russians, who wear high hats with ridiculously small brims, and long, smooth coats, and high boots. In private carriages the coachmen are always very fat, for that is the fashion. Sometimes one meets a coachman with a very thin, small face and a huge round body. He

appears to be fat, but this is because his clothes are stuffed to make him look big.

The streets are wide, and are lined on each side with a double row of poplar trees growing beside two muddy irrigation ditches. Half-naked men, with buckets or shovels, take water from the ditches and throw it over the street to lay the dust. Where the streets are not watered the dust is often three or four inches deep. When many people are passing, it is sometimes so thick that the voices of people who are walking along can be heard before the people themselves can be seen through



A scene in the streets of Samarkand

the veil of dust which hangs over the street. A mile or two from the railroad one comes into the Russian city. This is quite attractive, with its broad clean streets, its many trees, its whitewashed fences of mud, and its low one-story houses. The houses, like the fences, are whitewashed and often have roofs covered with red tiles. Every Russian house in the town is surrounded by a large garden full of fruit trees and tall poplars.

A little way from the new Russian city one comes

to the old native city. It is wholly different. The streets are very narrow, and there are no trees. On either side of the dusty road nothing can be seen except bare mud walls with little doors every fifty feet or so. Over the tops of the walls branches of fruit trees can be seen, and one knows that pleasant gardens are hidden behind the ugly walls. The streets are full of people. The men wear the most bright-colored dresses that can be imagined—pale blue, yellow, green, and purple. Many of them are clad in silk, and often a single gown has many colors. Sometimes one sees a man, on a donkey, dressed in a bright red gown with huge round, yellow spots on it, the biggest spot of all being in the middle of the man's back. In the streets the women, like those of other Mohammedan countries, have to wear very dull, homely clothes, although at home they, too, wear bright-colored silks.

It is not expensive to wear silk in Russian Turkistan. Partly because wages are low and partly because mulberry trees grow in great abundance in all the oases, silk is cheap. In May and June people eat the mulberries, and beggars often camp for weeks under the trees and actually live on nothing else. Yet this is not the chief use of the mulberry trees, for their leaves are the only good food for silkworms. Thousands and millions of these worms are raised, and the whole city is full of little factories where silk thread is being wound off from cocoons. The silk not used at home is exported to other lands, as is also cotton. The best cotton seed comes from America. So the natives think that every American must know all about how to raise cotton.

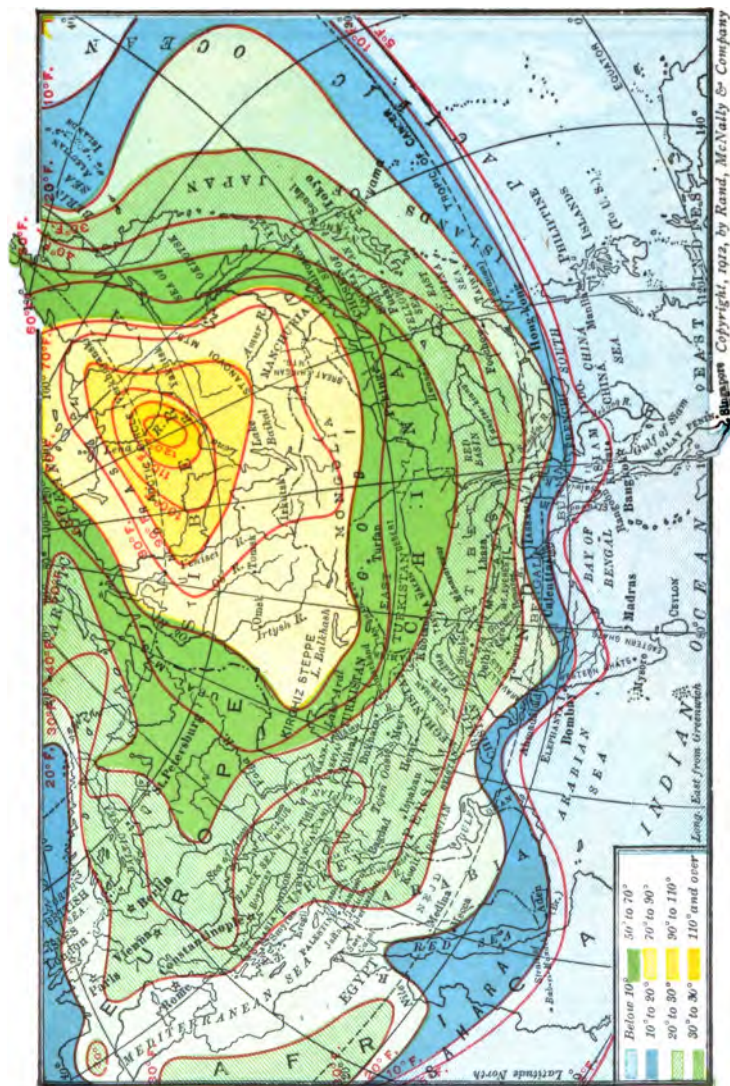
The streets of Samarkand abound not only in bazaars with little shops like those of Persia, but also in wonderful old mosques and tombs built by the famous Tartar

conqueror, Timour the Lame, and his successors. These men once ruled a great empire, with Samarkand as its



A shop in Samarkand

capital. It is hard for us to realize how great a country Russian Turkistan is. It is almost half as large as the United States; and yet it is only a small part of the whole of Russia's possessions in Asia. Its area is equal to that of the three states of the Pacific coast, the eight Plateau states, and the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska. The population is as great as that of all these fourteen states, with the addition of Minnesota and Kansas. To put it in another way, the area and population of Russian Turkistan are greater than the area and population of the United States west of the 100th meridian. From the Caspian Sea the country stretches eastward 1,700 miles, or nearly as far as from Chicago to San Francisco.

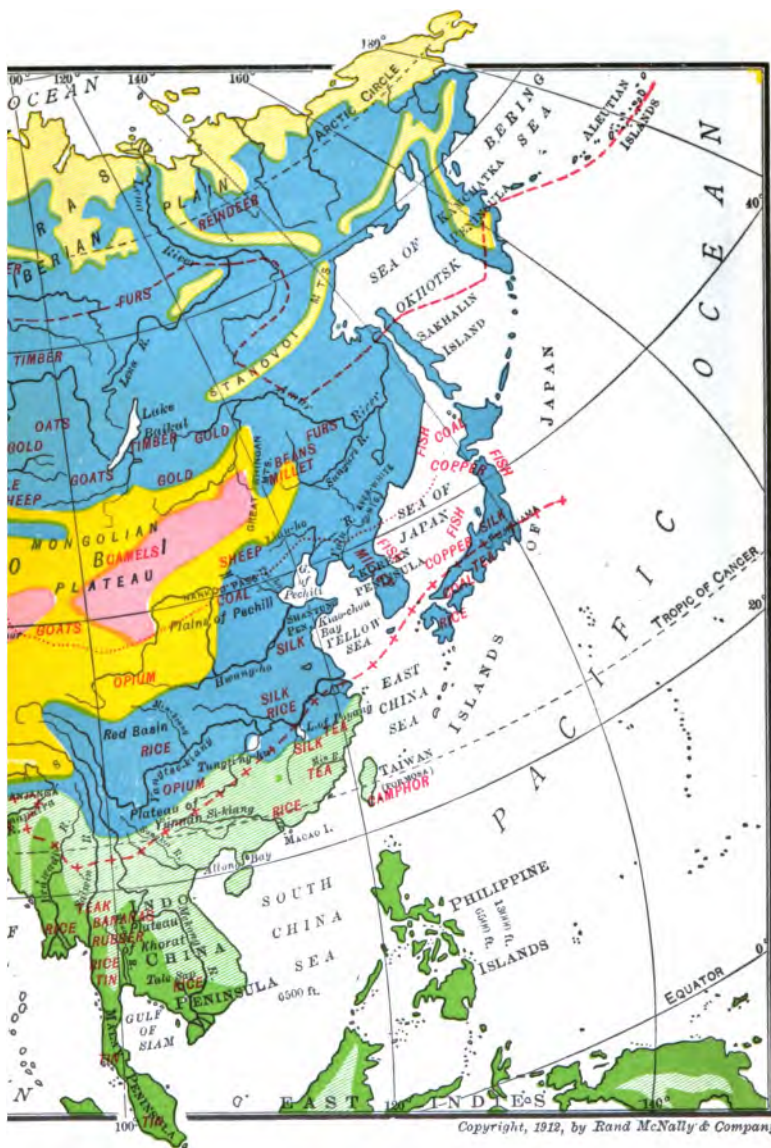


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Mean annual range of temperature

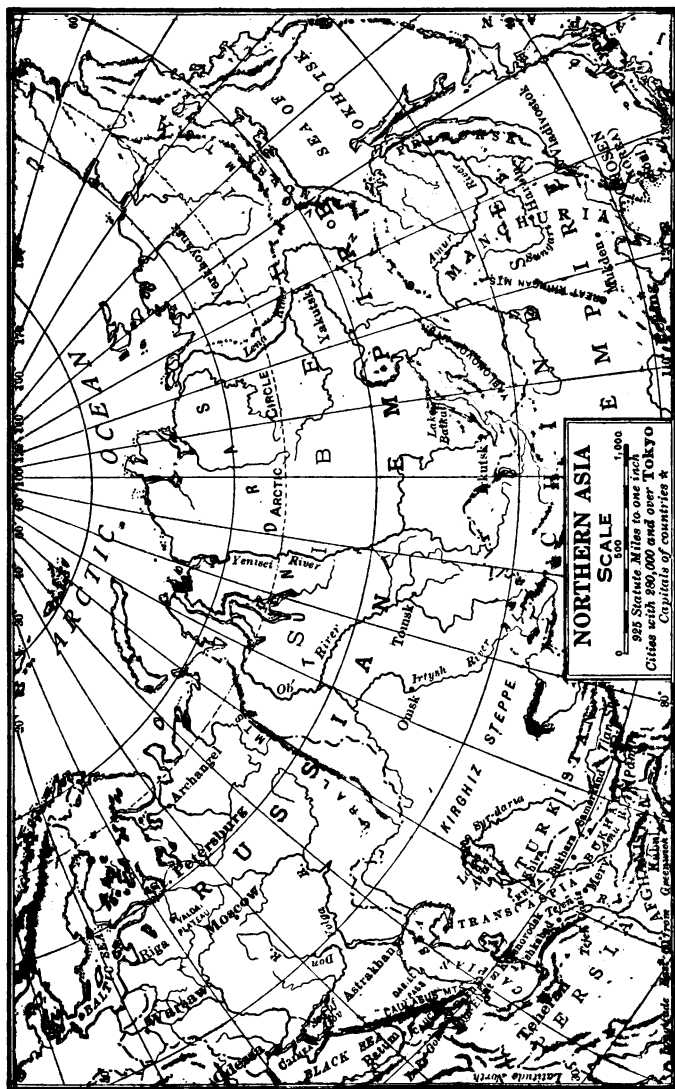


Areas of natural vegetal



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! vegetation



Northern Asia

CHAPTER XIII

SIBERIA: THE MOST AMERICAN COUNTRY IN ASIA

Siberian Pioneers. Among the countries of Asia Siberia is the one that most resembles America. Little by little, during the past two or three hundred years, the people of Russia have crossed the Ural Mountains and spread out over the broad plains of Siberia, just as the people of America crossed the Appalachians and spread out over the great plains of the United States and Canada. The earliest American pioneers were hunters and trappers, and so were those of Siberia. In the great forests of the Appalachian Highland and of the country extending from there far to the northwest into Canada, the chief source of wealth, at first, was the fur of the bear, beaver, mink, and many other animals. The Indians, and later the white men, caught or shot the animals and sent their skins to the more thickly settled regions east of the Appalachians, from which they were shipped to Europe. In the same way the far larger forests of Siberia tempted Russian adventurers to wander among them, seeking the fur of the sable, ermine, fox, and other animals.

The Siberian pioneers fought with the Tartars, Yakuts, Buriats, and other aboriginal peoples, just as the Americans fought with the Indians. Some of them treated the natives fairly and honestly. Others taught them to drink vodka, or whisky, and then sold them a dollar's worth of the stuff for twenty dollars' worth of furs, even as some of our countrymen did. The natives felt that they were being cheated and that their land was being

taken from them; and so they, on their side, massacred the white men, lied to them, and betrayed them, after solemnly promising to be friends.

The Settlement of Siberia from Russia. When the rough trappers and hunters had explored the country, other people began to come in to settle permanently. Many of them were exiles, or people whom the government sent away from Russia because they had been accused of crime. Some of the exiles were really bad men, who would have been put in prison, or even hanged, if they had lived in America. Others were the very best sort of men and women, useful people whom it was a bitter shame to send out into the wilderness. The bad exiles often lived by robbing and oppressing the natives. The good exiles would not do this, and as there was no work, they suffered great hardships, especially from cold, poverty, and hunger. They were reformers who wanted to improve the government of Russia, which was then very oppressive. Therefore, the rulers did not like them, and sent them as far away as possible into the worst places they could hear of.

Besides the criminals and the political exiles, as the reformers are called, there were many people who went to Siberia of their own accord. Part of these were dissenters, or people who did not believe in the national church of Russia. They wanted to worship in their own particular way. When they were not allowed to do this, they moved to Siberia and settled in out-of-the-way places, where the officials could scarcely find them. The remainder of the people who went of their own accord were regular settlers. They thought that they could make a better living by going to Siberia. When there were famines in Russia, as there often are when the rain fails in the dry southeast, the peasants began to talk of

settling in Siberia, where they heard that there was plenty of well-watered land. At first there were few such settlers, but now they go in large numbers. Many are helped by the government, which is very anxious to have Siberia well filled with people. Some of them do not have to pay taxes for a certain number of years, and others receive help in money. Because of these things the population of Siberia is now growing rapidly. It is not yet very dense, however. On an average, there are scarcely two persons for every square mile, while in the United States there are forty.

What the Future Promises. Enthusiastic Russians believe that after one or two centuries the two greatest nations of the world will be those that inhabit the two great northern plains. In the Western Hemisphere, they say, there will be a great nation occupying the plains of the northern United States and Canada. It may be divided politically, but the people of both parts are of the same race. In the Eastern Hemisphere there will be a great nation having its home in the vast plains of Russia and Siberia. Of course no one can tell exactly what will happen; but it is certainly true that Siberia and the northern part of America are the only two large regions of the earth which are cool enough for the white race and are not yet filled with people. They are the countries which have the greatest opportunity to develop. In the past two or three hundred years the histories of the two have been much alike, although their institutions differ widely. To-day America is ahead of Siberia. This is partly because its early settlers, instead of being exiles and criminals, were some of the most enlightened people in the world, and established a government under which every man is free to do his best. It is also partly because the great American plains extend farther

south than those of Asia and have a less severe climate.

The Resources of Siberia. As we have seen so many times, the way people live in any country depends on many factors. Let us see which of these are the most important in Siberia. One factor is the nature of the surface of a country, that is, its mountains, plains, hills, and valleys. Except in the far south and in the east, Siberia consists wholly of plains and low hills; so if this factor were the only one that made a difference the people would live in almost the same way in all parts.

Another thing is the relation of a country to the sea and to harbors. The shore of the Arctic Ocean is so cold that very few people live there. Ships cannot reach the coast, and there is no trade. On the Pacific coast all the northern shore is also too cold to be of use. Even as far south as the mouth of the Amur River the harbors are completely frozen for six months every year. It is only on the Manchurian coast that the harbors are open long enough to be of much use for commerce. Therefore the sea, like the mountains, has very little positive effect on most of the people of Siberia.

A third thing which influences the way in which people live is the nature of the soil and the presence of minerals. The plains of Siberia have almost the same sort of soil in all parts. The soil is rich and capable of producing fine crops, and the only important variations are due to climate. In plains no one expects to find valuable minerals. Generally the rocks are not of the kinds which have been twisted and folded and broken, and therefore filled with veins of metals. Moreover, they have not been arched up so that the minerals are exposed on the sides of the valleys. Outside of the famous Ural Range the mountains on the south and

east of Siberia are the only parts of the country where minerals are important. In those regions there are large deposits of gold, iron, and other metals. They are mined a little, but in many places they are scarcely used at all. One traveler says that a few years ago he met a long string of camels carrying iron made in Europe to a place in southeastern Siberia where there were large iron mines. The people did not use their own iron, but paid enormous freight charges to have iron brought by rail and caravan.

The two other important things which have much influence on the way in which people live are climate and the means of communication. In Siberia these two are far more important than the others.

The Effect of a Dry Climate in Transcaspia. From south to north the climate of Asiatic Russia grows steadily colder and more moist. In the far south the driest, warmest place in Russian territory is the desert of Transcaspia. It is very cold in winter, but the summers are terribly hot. An American once rode into the Transcaspian desert with a Turkoman in June. At the end of the first day the Turkoman said, "I did not know it was going to be so hot. I wish I had brought my heavy coat." He meant exactly what he said. The sun was so hot that it beat through his thin coat and made him uncomfortable. A very heavy coat would have been better to keep out the sun's heat. For the same reason the Arabs, as we have seen, bundle up their heads.

Transcaspia is so dry that there are not plants enough to hold the soil in place. Therefore, the finer parts have been blown away as dust, and only the sand is left, piled up in big dunes.

The Turkomans are so used to sand that they think

they need it. Some Turkomans who were traveling in eastern Persia, where the whole country is covered with gravel, came one night to a salty brook beside which was a little patch of sand. "Look," said one of them, "here is some sand. To-night we can have good bread."

- They made a fire on the sand and while it was burning they kneaded some dough. When all was ready, one man made the dough into two flat, round sheets, nearly eighteen inches in diameter and half an inch thick. Between these he put a great many lumps of fat from the big tail of a sheep. Another Turkoman, meanwhile, raked away the fire and smoothed off the hot sand under it. The double sheet of dough, like a big sandwich, was placed on the sand, and then more hot sand and the coals of the fire were placed on top of it. After fifteen or twenty minutes one of the men brushed off the coals and tapped the bread to see if it was done. Then he turned it over and covered it up again. When it was cooked and ready to eat there were many ashes in it, but it tasted very good to the Turkomans.

"How much better our way of cooking is than the Afghan way," said one. Many of the Afghans heat a round stone the size of a man's fist and, when this is hot, pull it out of the fire and wrap dough around it to the thickness of half an inch. It is then put in the hot ashes once more until the dough is baked. Both Afghans and Turkomans use the things which they have around them. The Turkoman's way of cooking, like all his ways of living, is greatly influenced by the dry climate of his plains.

The Effect of Climate in the Steppes. A little farther north in Asiatic Russia the plains become colder and a little more moist than in Transcaspia. In this region of

the Kirghiz Steppe, as it is called, there is not enough rain to allow trees to grow except close to the rivers. Neither is there enough rain to make farming profitable. So the Kirghiz and other Tartar tribes are pastoral nomads, who live part of the time in tents and part of the time in houses made of mud and wood. In winter they stay in the houses; in summer they travel from place to place with their animals and live in tents. They have a few camels and cows, but most of their wealth consists of small horses and sheep of various



The home of Russian colonists in the Siberian plains

colors. Their life is much like that of the people of the plateaus, whom we shall describe later.

The Effect of Climate in Central Siberia: The Wheat Fields and the Colonists. In the northern part of the Kirghiz Steppe the amount of rain increases, and more falls in summer than is the case farther south. Therefore, trees begin to appear in groups at a distance from the rivers. Soon, if one keeps on to the north, a beautiful park-like country is reached. Broad fields of grass, like

our prairies, are mingled with groves of cedar, pine, and birch. Villages are scattered at intervals of five or ten miles. They are the homes of Russian colonists who have come here because this is the best part of Siberia. The houses are low, thatched cabins made of logs, and banked up with sod around the bottoms to keep the wind out. The windows are small, and during the cold winters are often sealed up with paper to keep out every possible bit of air. Near each village stand great piles of brown hay, which is fed to the cattle in winter. The colonists raise wheat and other grains and vegetables, and are quite prosperous. At sunset of a summer day it is a very pretty sight to see the women and girls in bright red or blue dresses and the men in colored shirts, which are worn like coats belted at the waist and hanging down outside the loose trousers. Often on a Sunday afternoon one may see the boys of a village gathered on one side of the road and the girls in their bright dresses on the other. Sunday morning everyone goes to church in a large white building with a green dome. The priest always wears a long gown, and allows his hair to grow long over his shoulders and down his back. At their services the Russians do not sit down, as we do. There is not a seat in the whole church. Everyone stands, the men and boys usually on one side and the women and girls on the other. Often the audience stands two hours or more without seeming to grow tired. The Russians are a very reverent people.

Siberian Towns and the Siberian Railway. Naturally the chief towns of Siberia, such as Omsk, Tomsk, and Irkutsk, have grown up in this fertile region where grain grows bountifully and where the climate is just right for Russians. These cities seem very much like the cities of western America. They are new and full of

energy. Business is booming; new houses are going up very fast; factories are beginning to be built; and schools, colleges, museums, theaters, libraries, and all the various signs of high civilization are fast appearing. The Siberians are wonderfully hospitable and make a stranger feel much at home.

When the time came for a railroad to be built from Russia to the Pacific Ocean, it naturally was located along the broad belt of fertile wheat-raising country, where the chief towns are situated. The trains do not run fast, but they are comfortable and the fare is low. The cars are divided into compartments about six feet wide. In each compartment there are two seats, about seven feet long, facing each other. At the end of the compartment a door opens into a narrow corridor running the length of the car. At night a sort of shelf, like the upper berth of a sleeping car, is let down over each seat, so that



Russian girls dressed for a wedding

four people can sleep comfortably in a compartment. When a well-to-do Russian travels, he carries his own sheets, towels, pillow, and soap with him. If he is going on a winter journey, he also has his blankets. So he can be very comfortable on the train, even if he has to travel the two weeks' journey from St. Petersburg to the Pacific Ocean. The chief defect of Russian cars is that the windows are small and hard to open. They are made so purposely, because of the intense cold of Siberian winters. However, the cars are well warmed. Forests are so abundant in central Siberia that wood is far cheaper than coal for use in the engines. It is for this reason that for miles beside the track great piles of birch wood cut into short lengths are stacked in white rows.

The Solemn Forests of the North. Most of the great wheat-raising belt of Siberia was, and still is, covered with forests which grow more and more dense farther north. The main forest belt is from a thousand to thirteen hundred miles wide from north to south, and extends all the way across from west to east. It covers almost as much ground as the whole of the United States. Those who have not seen the virgin forest find it hard to realize its vastness and its somber gloom. In the United States our largest forests are broken by clearings and villages, and are crossed by roads and railroads. They are under the control of man. In Siberia no human hand controls the mighty woodland. Dark and forbidding, it stretches away for hundreds and thousands of miles. Day after day, and week after week, one may wander in it without seeing a sign of human dwellings or any living creature except wild animals or, perhaps, a Tungus or Ostyak native roaming in search of game the skins of which he may sell. The forest is so vast,

so silent, so hostile to man that the wanderer grows sad and timid. There seems to be no end to the vast extent of towering trees, and no hope of ever getting out into the open air and the sunshine.

The Tundras. In the far north the somber forest grows small and stunted, until finally, near the Arctic Circle, it is replaced by the barren tundras described in the first chapter. There the natives live on the milk of the reindeer and on the animals which they kill. If the reindeer die or the people have to sell them for food, the only other way they can make a living is to fish and hunt. Some of the natives go regularly from place to place, according to the season, following the fish. In summer the fish come up into the rivers to lay their eggs, and then the natives catch them in large quantities.

The Temperature of Northern Siberia. It is frightfully cold in these far northern regions with their short summers and long winters. A Swedish traveler says that the year he was there the real winter began, at the mouth of the Lena, on September 23, with a temperature of 15° below zero Fahrenheit. Before that it was very cold, but people did not call it winter. Yakutsk and Verkhoyansk, where the winter temperature is the lowest on record, are not at the extreme north, but 300 and 700 miles south of the Arctic Ocean in the forest belt. In winter, at Verkhoyansk, the temperature has been known to go down to 90° below zero; and in summer it sometimes rises to 90° above. At Yakutsk it goes down to 84° below and up to 102° above. In these places the ground, two feet or so below the surface, is frozen all the time. Crops of many kinds, including even watermelons, grow with their roots running down almost to the frozen part. In Yakutsk buildings are not set on a foundation of rock, but on one of frozen earth.

Although the Arctic Ocean is extremely cold, it is warmer than the land to the south of it, for not only does the ocean keep its heat better than land, but also the water of warm seas mingles with that of those that are cooler. Inasmuch as winds warmed by the Arctic Ocean blow in over northern Asia, the tundras are not so cold in winter as is the northeastern interior of Siberia. They are much colder than the interior in summer, however, and in winter they are far more disagreeable because they have terrific storms, while in



*Kirghiz drivers of a Russian post wagon making ready
for a journey*

the interior, at Yakutsk and elsewhere, the winter air is almost perfectly still, and there are few clouds and not much snow.

Transportation in Siberia. All the various kinds of country which we have spoken of, from Transcaspia to the tundras, owe their differences chiefly to climate. Let us see now what effect the climate and the character of the plains and of the plants which grow upon them have had upon transportation. In the south, where the plains are open and grassy, horses and camels are

abundant and cheap. There is very little need of building roads, for all parts of the plain can be traversed easily. Accordingly, most of the trade is carried on by means of caravans. Often hundreds of camels loaded with tea, wool, and other products are tied one behind the other and led from China or Turkistan into the southern part of Siberia. In other places loads are put on the backs of horses and carried in the same way. Already a few main wagon roads have been built in this region, and wagons are taking the place of caravans. Soon there will be railroads, but in the country regions among the nomads it is probable that caravans will be used for very many years, because animals can be fed so cheaply, and the population is not sufficient to cause much commerce.

A Russian Post Wagon. In the wheat-raising part of Siberia, as we have seen, a railroad has been built, while on every side post roads branch off to the remoter towns. The first day in a Russian post wagon is great fun. If the traveler has much baggage, he must take a "tarantas"—a vehicle like a small hay wagon with low sides made of boards. In front there is a seat for the driver, and at the back a cover like a large buggy top to cover the passengers. After the baggage has been strapped on behind or placed in the front of the tarantas, some hay is put in the bottom of the wagon, and blankets and pillows and other soft things are laid over the top. On these the traveler sits or, more often, half lies down.

When all is ready the horses are led out. The best-trained animal is put into the heavy spreading shafts under a wooden arch on which hangs a jingling bell. Then two other horses are fastened by loose traces on either side, outside the shafts. Often the outer horses

are only half trained. When the attendants let go of the animals' heads they dash off at a gallop, and if the



Arriving at a post station in Siberia

driver is not ready with the reins firmly in his hands, they are likely to tip the wagon over. Sometimes, if the horses are young or only half trained, they gallop madly for a mile or two. Occasionally in the open plain they run off the road and go circling over the fields, but at last they become a little tired and settle down to a steady trot or a slow gallop. While all this is happening the passenger is bumping around under the wagon top. After riding from twelve to twenty miles the driver pulls up at a low, whitewashed house with a striped pole in front of it. It is the post station. Sometimes it is in a village; but often it stands alone in the midst of the plain or the forest.

When the traveler climbs out, he is likely to be a little stiff and sore, unless the road has been unusually smooth. The station keeper comes out, wearing a military cap with a sort of button on the front of it.

Every one who does any work for the government wears an official cap of some kind, sometimes with a uniform and sometimes without. From the color and shape of the cap and the marks on the button one can tell exactly what work a man does. If the traveler is in a hurry, he asks to have horses brought at once. Sometimes the station-keeper says, "All right," and at once sends off a boy to catch some animals. At other times he says, "I guess you will have to wait awhile. It is time for the mail in two hours. I don't know whether it will come in two wagons or in three or four. I can't send off the horses with you, because they might be needed for the mail. If I did not have them here for that I should lose my place."

While the horses are being brought the traveler buys something to eat. If he chooses to wait, the wife of the station keeper will prepare some meat and potatoes and a soup full of meat and cabbage, called "shtchee¹." If he is in a great hurry, he must be content with eggs, milk, bread, and tea. Russians are tremendously hungry people. Unless the traveler says exactly how many boiled eggs he wants, the landlady will always bring him five, and expect him to eat them all. Often a man says, "Give me two fives," and she brings ten eggs.

If one wants to travel night and day he can do so, and can go nearly two hundred miles in twenty-four hours if he does not have to wait for the post. It is very hard work, because it is impossible to sleep in the jolting wagon. After a few days of it one feels half asleep all the time, and keeps dozing off only to be awakened by the next bump. The Russian post system is wonderfully well managed. It could have developed

¹ The word is pronounced almost like the italicized letters in the words *smasht cheese*.

only in a very large country of plains, where horses were cheap and great distances had to be traveled. In winter sleighs are used, and the horses go very fast indeed. Sometimes it is so cold that once in half an hour the driver must get out and knock the ice away from the horses' noses, where the moisture from their breath has frozen. If he did not, the ice would stop up their nostrils and they could not breathe.

Siberian Rivers. Besides the caravans, the railroads, and the post wagons, there is one other very important means of travel—the rivers. To-day large steamers run on them all summer when there is no ice. In the old days, when explorers came to the country, they found it impossible to travel through the forests. They and the settlers who followed them had to use the rivers; and even to-day in the north it is only by sailing along the rivers that one can reach many parts of the country. The explorers were obliged to zig-zag greatly when they wanted to go east, for the rivers all flow more or less directly north. Starting on one river near the Ural Mountains, they floated down to the main stream in a northeast direction. Then they went up or down the main river until they found another large stream coming in on the east side. Up this stream they rowed and paddled their boats and rafts. Where the streams flowed gently this was easy, and most of the streams do flow gently for hundreds of miles in their lower courses; for Siberia is very flat. Near their sources, where they flow among the highlands, they run swiftly over rapids and are of small size. In these places the pioneers, day after day, had to get out and wade and pull their boats behind them. Coming at last to the head of a stream, they carried everything except the boats over the low divide to another stream flowing to the next great river. It

was impossible to carry the boats, and new ones had to be made. Sometimes, after making boats or rafts on two or three rivers, the pioneers had no nails left, and were obliged to make boats entirely of wood, using wooden pegs for nails. On the branches of the Lena River there are still boats of this kind. On the main rivers, however, good sized steamers run regularly during the summer season of open water.

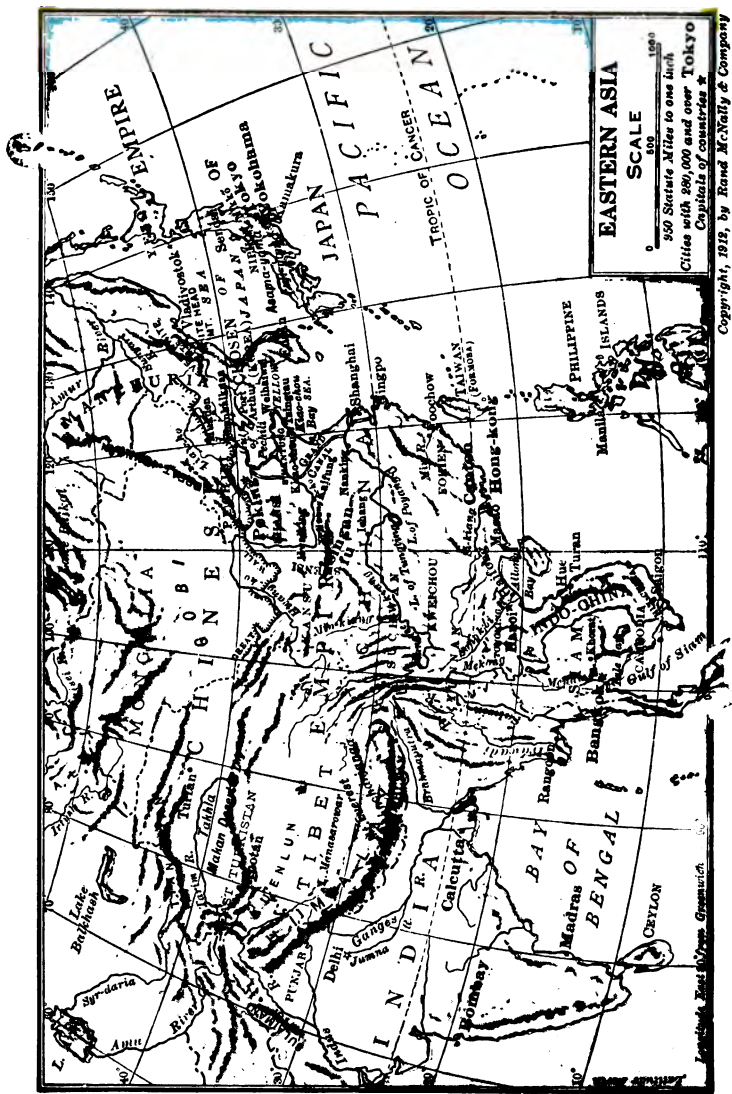
Wherever one goes in Siberia, he feels that it is a country of enormous size. He notices, too, how cold it is, for even in summer he can see the signs of winter. All the time he feels that it is as yet but partially developed but that it is growing, and that some day it will be very different from what it is to-day.

CHAPTER XIV

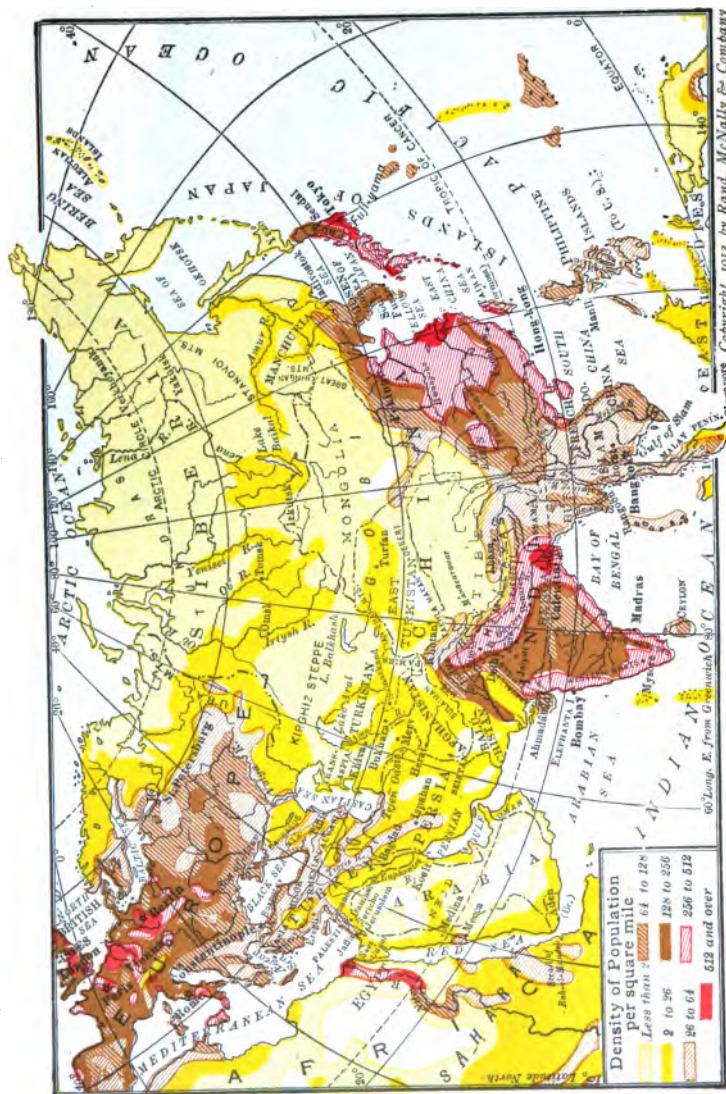
THE PLATEAUS OF INNER ASIA

The Natural Divisions of Eastern Asia. In our study of the geography of Asia we have now come to the great eastern division, the dense population of which comprises more than half the people of the continent. Eastern Asia, it will be remembered, is bounded on the southwest by the Himálaya and Burmese mountains, which separate it from India. On the northwest it is bounded by the mountains which run from the Pamirs to the Sea of Okhotsk. These separate Russia from China, except to the north of Manchuria, where Russia has forced her way over the Stanovoi Mountains to the sea. A careful study of the physical map shows that Eastern Asia is divided into two very different parts by the Great Khingan Range and other mountains, which form a fairly continuous line running south and southwest from near the Sea of Okhotsk to the eastern end of the Tibetan Plateau and along the broken edge of the plateau almost to Siam. The region east of the mountains is the Pacific Slope, and the region to the west is Inner Asia.

The Populous Pacific Slope of Asia. The Pacific Slope consists of a strip of country from three hundred to one thousand miles wide and more than three thousand miles long, extending from the Sea of Okhotsk to the Gulf of Siam. It is a beautiful region of mountains and low hills, with large fertile plains at frequent intervals. Winds from the Pacific Ocean blow over it in summer, bringing abundant rain and making it very fruitful. Therefore, except in the cold northern parts, it is densely



Eastern Asia



Density of population of Asia

inhabited, and contains practically all the people of Eastern Asia, or one-third of the people of the world.

It is divided into various parts by natural boundaries. In the north lie the countries of Manchuria and Chosen (Korea), with Japan separated from them by the sea. The large central portion forms what is known as China Proper—the “Flowery Kingdom of the Eighteen Provinces,” as the Chinese call it. The warm southern portion is divided into French Indo-China and Siam. In all these places the people are alike in many ways, just as are the people of all the chief countries of Europe. Chinese influence can be seen in the customs of all parts. In climate and scenery and in many other ways, the Pacific Slope of Asia is much like the Atlantic Slope of North America from the St. Lawrence River to the Gulf of Mexico, including the Atlantic Plain and the Appalachian Highland. Similarly, as we have seen, the plains of Siberia are like the plains of America.

The Khingan Escarpment and Inner Asia. The eastern slope of the Great Khingan Mountains and of their southwestern continuation rises steeply, and is often covered with trees nourished by rain brought by winds from the Pacific Ocean. The western slope is more gentle and much shorter, and is dry and bare. It does not lead down to fruitful plains or beautiful valleys, but to a naked plateau high above the level of the sea. The Great Khingan Mountains ought not to be called mountains, for they are mountainous only on one side. Really, they are what is called an escarpment—a great step between a plateau and a lowland. Many rivers flow across the escarpment. In the course of thousands of years they have cut valleys in it, but these valleys are very narrow. Often they are canyons in which the

ivers, in their steep descent from the plateau to the lowland, plunge over frequent rapids, up which boats cannot ascend. Therefore, it is much harder to reach the center of Asia than to reach the center of North America, where the Mississippi River and its tributaries have no rapids except close to the sources.

Away from the river valleys it is often hard to climb the eastern side of the Khyang Escarpment. This, like the rapids, tends to keep the Pacific Slope and Inner Asia somewhat separate from each other. There is another, and still more important, condition which divides the two regions. The winds coming from the Pacific Ocean have given up a large part of their moisture before they reach the escarpment. There they rise rather suddenly and give up most of the remainder. Accordingly, when they descend to the plateaus on the other side, they are very dry. The same thing happens where the winds cross the other mountainous borders of Inner Asia. Therefore, the whole country is parched, except in a few especially high districts, and the habits of the people are not like those prevailing on the Pacific Slope.

Tibet. Inner Asia consists largely of plateaus, but there are also some great basins. The highest of the plateaus is Tibet. In this high country, from two to three miles above the sea, the winters are very cold, and even in summer the nights are sometimes frosty. Tibet is so high and cold that much of it consists of great gravel plains, where nothing grows except a few bits of grass. Little rain falls here, for the air has lost its moisture by the time it gets across the mountains. The country is bare, bleak, and open, with snowy mountains and clear blue lakes on every side. In slightly lower regions there is more grass, upon which sheep and yaks may feed, and here the people live a nomadic life, like the Kirghiz

of the high plateaus farther north. In a few low valleys crops can be raised, and there the people live in perma-



Tibetans living in a valley which is almost as high as the top of Pikes Peak

nent villages composed of flat-roofed houses with rude stone walls. Tibet is as large as the United States east of the Mississippi River and north of Tennessee; but it has only about one-thirtieth as many people, and probably never will have many more than it now has.

The Tibetans are a simple, friendly people. Life is hard among them, but they are the most cheerful people imaginable. Dressed in sheepskins or long woolen coats and wearing sheepskin hats with earlaps, they do not mind the cold. Now and again a man is seen clad in reddish-purple, from warm cap to boots. He is a lama, or Buddhist monk. One son from every family is expected to be a monk. In each village there is supposed to be a

lamasery—a queer place full of images of Buddha and the saints, and hung with all manner of gaudy banners.



Tibetan officials traveling on horseback

Tibet is such a poor country that it cannot support any more people. If many children were born and the number of people increased, there would not be food enough for all. Therefore, many Tibetans do not marry, but become monks and nuns. Among those who marry there is a custom quite unlike that of other places. Elsewhere in Asia it is common for a man to have two or more wives. Among the Tibetans one woman often marries all the brothers of a family.

Mongolia. Another of the plateaus of Inner Asia is Mongolia. It is even larger than Tibet, almost three times as large, but it has not many more people, because of its extreme aridity. The plateau is much lower than Tibet and, accordingly, does not get so much rain. The summers are very hot and the winters very cold. Much of the plateau is an absolute desert of sand. The people are mostly nomads.

Smaller Plateaus of Inner Asia. In addition to Tibet and Mongolia there are smaller plateaus in Inner Asia, some high like Tian Shan and others lower like the Altai region. There are also several basins, the chief of which is that of Lop in Chinese or East Turkistan. The Lap Basin is larger than Tibet and has about the same population. Its people live in fertile oases at the foot of the mountains. We shall describe them in the next chapter. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the Kirghiz nomads of the Tian Shan Plateau. The people of Tian Shan differ in race from those of either Mongolia or Tibet, but all three races are nomads and live in much the same way. Nomads and oasis dwellers are the only sort of people who can live in Inner Asia, because it is so dry. The whole number of people in the region is only five million. Yet the area is as great as that of the United States, and more than that of the Pacific Slope of Asia, which has about one hundred times as many people. If Inner Asia had as much rain as the Pacific Slope, it could support almost as many people.



A Mongol encampment

The Necessity of Nomadism in Tian Shan. The Tian Shan Plateau is a great upland about ten thousand feet above the sea. From its general level, snowy mountains rise to much greater heights, while between them broad plains and basins lie spread out for miles. Snow covers even the lowest basins for seven or eight months of the year, and farming is impossible. There is a great deal of fine grass, however, full of wild flowers, such as pansies, daisies, and gentians, and a host of others. The grass furnishes good pasture for many kinds of animals during the summer; but neither animals nor men can live in the deep snow during the winter. If people are to use the grass, they must be nomads who come up to the plateau with their animals in summer and go down to the lower valleys in winter.

Up on the plateau it is best to move from place to place every two or three weeks; for otherwise the grass in one spot is eaten up, and the animals do not get so fat as they do when they have all the grass they want. So the Kirghiz have adopted the nomadic life. They move regularly from place to place, according to the season, coming back to a given spot at about the same time each year. Since they move around so much, their houses must be of a kind that can easily be taken to pieces and carried about; hence tents are used. Willow wood and woolen cloth, being the easiest materials to get, are used for making these portable dwellings. The tents have large round holes in the top to let out the smoke; for fires are often made in them. Even the richest men cannot have very large tents, because large tents cannot be moved. So the rich and the poor all live in much the same way, which makes the Kirghiz democratic.

Migrations Among the Kirghiz. A Kirghiz migration

is an interesting sight. At evening a village of ten or fifteen round, gray tents stands on a grassy slope at the foot of massive limestone cliffs. At one side hundreds of stupid sheep, with huge fat tails, try to push their way into the middle of a large flock. Women in dresses of white cotton, or of red, green, or yellow silk, catch some of the sheep and milk them, while funny little lambs run about, bleating and trying to find their mothers. On the other side of the tents herds of neighing, kicking horses, fat mares, and frisky colts are mixed up with stolid cows and oxen, or with camels. The camels are great beasts with two humps. They love the dry desert, and are likely to catch cold in the moist mountains where they are taken to grow fat. So the Kirghiz make coats of felt for them, which are worn night and day.

In the morning the attractive scene of the evening is wholly changed. Pieces of tents are lying on the ground, with household goods scattered all around them. In one place a number of gay leather boxes stand on the green grass; near by some quilts are spread on the ground. Next to these lies a pile of saddles, and beyond them some red and blue rugs, a dozen leather bags and buckets, and some wooden bowls. There are no chairs or tables or beds. The furniture and dishes are of very simple kinds, which can be carried easily on the backs of animals, and will not break if the loads fall off when the animals run away.

Very early in the morning the slow-moving, pattering flocks of sheep are sent away to spend the day in walking the twelve miles to the next encampment. Then oxen and camels are led up to be loaded. A camel nine feet high is a very fierce-looking animal, but little Kirghiz girls, seven or eight years old, are not at all afraid of such a beast. A girl will lead a camel up to a pile of tent

cloth and poles, and twitch the rope tied to a peg through the animal's nose. The camel roars horribly and tries



A Kirghiz mother and daughter coming to make a call

to get away, but when she twitches the rope again the great animal drops down on its knees, then squats on its hind legs, and lastly pushes forward its knees until the horny pad on its breast rests on the ground, and it is ready to be loaded. When a camel's load has been well fastened on, a mother takes her baby and ties it securely into a little wooden cradle, which she puts on top of the camel. Over the cradle she throws a big rug, and ties it down tightly. Then the camel gets up and walks about, and the mother, in spite of the crying of her baby, goes off to help in loading the other pack animals.

While the women and girls are doing these things, the men and boys are catching riding horses. For this purpose a boy takes a pole, like a fishing pole with a rope tied to the end of it in place of a fish line. He jumps on a bridled, unsaddled horse that has been kept tied near

the tents all night, and gallops away after another horse. Often he has a long chase, but in the end he is pretty sure to be able to throw the rope around a horse's neck and bring the animal in to be saddled.

At last everything is packed, and the procession is now ready to start. First comes a group of men on good horses, then some women and girls riding their horses astride quite as well as their husbands and brothers. The girls wear silk dresses like those of their mothers or, if it is cold, long gowns of quilted cotton. On their heads they wear big caps with broad fur brims, even in summer. When they are married, they will give up the caps and wear headdresses of white or pink cloth, prettily embroidered and many yards long. The cloth is wound around the head again and again, until it forms a cylinder a foot high. Then, too, they will lengthen the braids of their straight black hair by adding black thread or horsehair. At the end they will tie some silver coins and the keys to all the family boxes. They will have no pockets, but they will never lose their keys, which jingle behind them not far above their heels.

Next in the procession after the girls comes a man on a cow; then a heavily-loaded camel with two small boys swaying around on top of the load, and two funny baby camels running behind. After these, two fat cows, with rings in their noses and loads of poles on their backs, walk quietly along. They are driven by an old man with a black fur cap, who carries on his wrist a hunting eagle with a leather hood over its eyes. His little grandson, three years old, stands on the horse's back behind him, firmly grasping the old man's shoulders. No Kirghiz fears a horse. The little boy's brother comes next, riding on a young steer and driving a herd of frisky horses. Toward evening the camping place

has been reached by every one. Once more the tents are all in place and everything looks as it did the night before, twelve miles away.

The Travels and Hospitality of the Kirghiz. The Kirghiz are compelled to travel so much that they prize horses more than anything else. If a Kirghiz is going to make a journey, he starts out in the morning on his horse. By noon, perhaps, he comes to another camp, where he leaves his own horse and takes another. The next day, as he goes on, he takes a third and a fourth, changing horses as often as he chooses and never paying anything. By and by the horses are taken back to their owners; but nobody cares if his horse is away two or three weeks, because all but the very poor have a great many. Of course there are no hotels or inns in the Tian Shan country. So the Kirghiz, like all nomadic people, are very hospitable. They love to have guests, and often kill a lamb or a sheep for them. Sour milk is the commonest food, although much meat is eaten. Many of the Kirghiz have almost no bread, since they cannot raise any crops among the mountains. In some places bread is so rare that the children almost never taste it. They think it is as good to get a piece of bread as children in America think it is to get candy.

CHAPTER XV

A SEA OF SAND AND SALT

Old Stories of the Lop Basin. In the old days before people knew much about geography, they used to tell queer stories about the Lop Basin in Chinese Turkistan. It is so hard to reach the basin that very few people go there, and explorers have only recently found out the truth. According to one old story, the middle of the basin was occupied by a vast sea of sand instead of water. The sea, so it was said, had great waves which rose and fell like those of the ocean. It could not be crossed in boats or in any other way. In it, wonderful to say, many delicious fish were supposed to live, without water. Of the rivers which flowed into the sea one was said to be made of precious stones instead of water, and others were thought to flow six days of the week and rest on Sunday.

The Sea of Sand of the Takhla Makan Desert. Of course these stories are not true, but every one of them has some truth back of it. For example, the sea of sand is a sandy desert as long as from New York to Chicago and as wide as from Cincinnati to Detroit. It consists of sand which has been blown by the winds into long dunes or rows, like waves. On the side from which the strongest winds blow the dunes slope gently, while on the other side the slopes are steep and very hard to climb. Some of the dunes are only a few feet high and fifty or a hundred feet long. Others are like small mountains, four or five hundred feet high and many miles long. Among the big dunes it is impossible to travel, because it is so hard to walk up the steep slopes in the soft sand.

Even if one could walk, it would be impossible to travel far, as there is no water.

Once a bold Swedish traveler named Hedin crossed part of this desert, carrying water for his men, but none for his camels. After four or five days the camels became very hungry and thirsty, for it was not possible to find water so soon as Hedin had expected. By and by a camel died, and then another. The water for the men, which was carried in leather bags, was all used up, and they, too, began to be very thirsty and terribly weary. Finally they could go no farther; the last camel gave out, and there seemed to be no way to get any water. The natives lay down to die. Hedin would not give up, but struggled on through the sand, sometimes falling down because he was so weary. He knew he must be near the border of the sandy country and that there he would find a river. By and by he saw some poor, half-dead trees, and then the tracks of animals, which proved that water was near. At last he reached the river and lay down beside it to drink. As soon as he had refreshed himself and gained his strength again, he took off his high boots, filled them with water, and tramped back to revive the men whom he had left perishing in the desert.

The Rivers of the Lop Basin. In a country so dry as this the only water is that which comes from rivers. The Lop Basin is surrounded on every side by the high plateaus where the Kirghiz, Tibetans, and Mongols live. At the foot of the plateaus, thousands of feet below the grassy uplands, rivers come out from mountain valleys and deposit their load of sand and pebbles in the form of a great sloping plain, like that of Transcaspia. This deposit of piedmont gravel, as it is called because it is found at the foot of the mountains, is very

dry and bare, looking almost like an enormous beach from five to forty miles wide. There is nothing to be seen in crossing it except whirlwinds of dust blown up hundreds of feet and countless pebbles which have been polished and carved by the wind-driven sand into little three-cornered pyramids. In this gravel most of the rivers lose themselves. Their waters simply sink into the ground and disappear. During sunny days, when much snow melts upon the mountains, the rivers flow far, even across the gravel. When clouds shield the mountains from the sun and very little snow melts, the rivers disappear as soon as they reach the gravel. This explains how it came to pass that the old stories told of rivers of stone, which flowed some days and not others. At Khotan when the river dries up, crowds of people go out and dig in its bed for jade, a kind of stone which is extremely hard and of which the Chinese are very fond. It is red, white, green, or black, and makes pretty bowls, pipes, and bracelets. One might almost say that the river of Khotan is a stream of precious stones.

The Zones of the Lop Basin. The Lop Basin is divided into zones or rings, as it were. On the outside lies the plateau zone, and inside that, the barren zone of gravel. Then comes a zone of vegetation where all the oases are, and inside that, the sandy desert. The ring or zone of vegetation does not get any more rain than the deserts on either side of it; but a great deal of water, which has been lost in the gravel, here lies just below the surface of the ground. Accordingly, many plants can grow, such as reeds, poplars, and feathery tamarisk bushes with tiny grayish-green scales for leaves and sweet-scented purple sprays of flowers. In the zone of vegetation life is very easy. The Chantos, who inhabit it, get water from

springs or from the few rivers which cross the gravel. They spread it over the fertile soil and are able to raise many kinds of crops. Occasionally one sees miles and miles of fields, with yellowish-gray walls of dry mud around them. The houses, which are also made of mud, are surrounded by gardens of fine melons, vineyards full of luscious grapes, and orchards of splendid peaches, apricots, plums, and other fruit. At Turfan, a small basin near the Lop Basin, the people of one village do nothing but raise grapes—a small green kind without seeds. These grapes make such good raisins that supplies of them are sent a three months' journey by caravan every year to Peking, for use in the Emperor's palace.

The Chantos of the Zone of Vegetation. The people of the pleasant oases hate to go out into the dreary desert. So they stay at home, and know very little about other parts of the world. This makes them timid and always



Chanto men and boy drinking tea in a garden

anxious to please strangers, whom they fear. They always say the thing which they think will please others. Once a traveler hired one of them as a guide in the desert. The other villagers said that the man knew all about the desert and could take the traveler to a well there. The native, who was chief of the canals and distributed the water of the oasis, did not dare confess that he did not know the place, for fear he would be laughed at or the traveler would be angry. He trusted to luck to find the well. The party wandered around in the sand for four days in hot weather. Their water came to an end, and they had to hurry anxiously back to the river. The camels became so thirsty that their throats rattled horribly. If the Chantos did not lead such easy lives in the sheltered oasis, and had not thus become so weak and cowardly, they would tell the truth and save themselves and others many annoying experiences.



*A Chanto dinner of sour milk
and coarse corn bread*

Sand-buried Ruins. The traveler with the poor guide was looking for ruins. In many places there are the remains of old villages far out in the midst of the sand, where now there is no water. The natives say that long ago the people who lived in the ruins were very wicked.

The traveler with the poor guide was looking for ruins. In many places there are the remains of old villages far out in the midst of the sand, where now there is no water. The natives say that long ago the people who lived in the ruins were very wicked.

A holy man came and told them to repent. When they would not do it, he began to turn a hand mill of the



A roadway in an oasis in Chinese Turkistan

kind used for grinding flour. When he turned it, sand began to fall from the sky and buried the villages. This is merely a legend, or story, to explain something which the people do not understand. During the last one or two thousand years the climate of Chinese Turkistan, and of other parts of Asia, has grown more and more dry. The rivers have become smaller; and in many places where once there were many people no one can now live. The sand in the desert is moving all the time. When a village has to be given up for lack of water, sand quickly blows in and covers it up.

Deposits of Loess Made by the Wind. When the wind blows hard, so much sand and dust are borne along in the air that no one can see more than a few hundred feet. The sand blows into people's eyes and almost makes them blind. Travelers cover their heads with cloths and lie down to wait till the wind dies away. If the wind lasts

long the sand sometimes smothers people. When it is over, the air is gray and dim with falling dust for days. In writing a letter the paper must be brushed every ten or fifteen minutes, or else the dust will be so thick that the pen will be clogged. A great deal of dust is blown southward from the desert to the mountains. There it slowly falls, and is kept from being carried away by the grass which grows on the mountain slopes. In this way deep accumulations of a peculiar yellow earth called loess have been brought from the desert and laid down in the moister places, where they form fertile soil. Millions of people dwell on deposits of this kind in China Proper.

Lop-nor: The Lake of the Lop Basin. There are a few rivers in Chinese Turkistan that are not lost in the gravel, and are not used for irrigation. They flow to the lowest part of the basin, and there form an irregular lake. It is like that of Seistan, except that it is smaller and more shallow. Most of it is merely a great marsh full of tall reeds. The deeper parts of the lake contain fish, which are caught by people called Lopliks, who live in houses made of reeds. The Lopliks eat almost nothing but fish. Long ago, when people first heard about the Lop Basin, they were told that fish came from it. As they did not know of the lake, but only of the sand, they thought that the fish lived in the sand. The part of the lake of Lop farthest from the mouths of the rivers is salty. Long ago, in the days when people lived in the region where sand has now buried the ruins of old towns, the lake was much larger. As the lake grew smaller, great quantities of salt were deposited in its old bed. Now, a plain of hard rock salt, two hundred miles or more long, surrounds the lake. There is not the slightest sign of any living thing, either plant or animal. For

days one stumbles over angular blocks of rock salt, broken into sheets an inch or two thick, which stick up two or three feet like the frozen waves of a choppy sea. When an explorer who was crossing it picked out what seemed like a soft, smooth place in which to pitch a tent, he found that the salt was so hard it bent the iron tent pegs double. He and his men had to take axes and chop away the hummocks of salt in order to get places large enough to lie down on at night to sleep. The sea of salt and the sea of sand in Chinese Turkistan are probably the most barren deserts in the world outside of Arabia.

CHAPTER XVI

MANCHURIA: THE LAND OF BEANS

The Manchurian Bean. Everyone in the United States has heard of Boston baked beans, but few people know anything about Manchurian bean cake. Manchurian beans are of many colors—red, white, green, black, yellow, and spotted. They are raised almost everywhere, and are used in all sorts of ways. Some are eaten green, some are



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Grinding grain in Manchuria

pickled, and others are dried and boiled. Part of the crop is also fed to horses and cattle, and part exported to Japan and south China. Often beans are allowed to sprout in water until the plump white roots are about two inches long. Then they are boiled and stewed with a little meat, or with only a gravy, and form the favorite Chinese dish called "chop suey." Sometimes the beans are boiled a little and then ground into flour. The flour is made into dough, which is pressed through a peculiar colander with holes the size of a very large pin. The dough comes out in long white strings like the kind of macaroni called vermicelli. This bean macaroni is eaten in most parts of China,

and is very good. For home use the Manchurians make a sort of bean cheese. Besides all these ways of using beans, great quantities are boiled and then pressed, to get the oil which they contain. Part of the oil is used for food, like olive oil and butter; and part is used for native lamps, like kerosene. When it is to be sent to distant places, it is put in great wicker baskets lined with paper, or else in tight wooden boxes. The dry part left after the oil is squeezed out forms the famous Manchurian bean cake. It is sold for good prices to the Japanese and Chinese for fertilizing the fields.

The Resemblance between Manchuria and North-eastern United States. Before New England became a manufacturing region, most of the inhabitants were farmers. The climate is just right for raising certain kinds of beans which do not grow so well farther south. Naturally, in New England the people raised a good many. Hence, people joke about Boston baked beans. At present most of the food which New Englanders eat comes from the West, and the places where beans are chiefly raised are western New York and southern Michigan. The climate there is nearly the same as that of New England, but the plains are larger and the rocks fewer than farther east. The northeastern part of the United States is the bean region of the Western Hemisphere, just as Manchuria is the bean region of the Eastern Hemisphere. The reason is that both places have a climate adapted to the growth of especially good varieties of that particular vegetable.

There are many other much more important ways in which the two regions are alike. The country from the Amur River southward to the Yellow Sea, including Manchuria, Chosen, and the strip of Siberia called Primorsk, which lies north of Vladivostok, is in the same

latitude as that part of North America which extends from the St. Lawrence River southwestward to Chesapeake Bay. Both regions are located on the east side of a great continent and on the west side of a great ocean. Therefore, they have much the same type of climate, the same kinds of plants and animals, and the same relation to the countries round about.

Differences between Manchuria and Northeastern United States: Rainfall. Although the American region, of which New England is the center, and the Asiatic region, of which Manchuria is the center, are alike in many ways, there are several important points in which they differ. For instance, in Asia high mountains rise close to the sea, and their ruggedness prevents the coast from being as thickly settled as it is in America. They also shut out part of the rain which would otherwise fall on the inland districts. Therefore, as one goes west from the Liau-ho and the Sungari he finds the country growing more and more dry. The plains at the foot of the Khingan Escarpment have so little rain that there is almost no agriculture. Those in a corresponding place in America form the rich states of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, where there is plenty of rain and where some of the finest farms in the world are located.

Out-blowing and In-blowing Continental Winds. Another important difference between the Asiatic and American regions is due to the fact that Eurasia is very much larger than North America. The land in all parts of the world grows cool or grows warm much faster than the sea. In winter Eurasia cools off very fast during the short days, when the sun in all the northern parts never gets high above the horizon. This causes the air over the land to contract so that the air over the ocean stands, so to speak, at a higher level

than that over the land. Therefore, far above the earth's surface there is a landward flow, and the amount of air over the land increases. It presses down on the land and causes winds which blow out toward the ocean, especially eastward across the northern part of Manchuria and the Pacific Slope, which thus becomes very cold. Even in the southern part of Manchuria the thermometer often goes down to about 20° below zero, and farther north a temperature of 30° or 40° below zero is common. The winds that blow out from Siberia contain very little moisture. Hence, there is not much snow in winter.

In the summer just the opposite happens. The great land mass of Eurasia grows very warm during the long sunny days of June and July, especially in the dry regions of Inner Asia. Warm air, as everyone knows, expands. Thus, at high levels air begins to flow out toward the sea, which is now relatively cool. This destroys the balance of pressure, because there is now more air over the ocean than over the land. Therefore, cold air from the ocean comes in from all sides, taking the place of the warm air which it causes to rise. Thus, during the summer, strong winds blow in from the Pacific Ocean across Manchuria and the other parts of the Pacific Slope of Asia. Since it has come from the sea, the air contains much water. When it reaches the land and is obliged to rise, or becomes cool for any other reason, it gives up the water in the form of heavy rain.

The Heavy Rains of Summer. In Manchuria sometimes half of the yearly rainfall of twenty or thirty inches falls in the two months of June and July, or of July and August. Everything is soaked. The rivers all overflow and spread out so that they are very nearly like lakes. Umbrellas are of little use if one has to stay out long.

Some of the wilder native tribes make themselves clothes of the skins of large salmon, to shed the rain. Sometimes in wet weather one meets a native dressed only in a loin cloth and a big hat like an umbrella. The rest of his clothes are on top of his head, wrapped in an oilskin, so that he may have something dry to put on when he reaches a village.

The Difficulties of Transportation. During the rainy season the roads of Manchuria are merely long lanes of mud, sometimes soft and oozy, and at other times somewhat stiff and very sticky. It is almost impossible to travel, except in the mountains where the roads are rocky and hard. In the great central plains, where most of the people live, there is not a sign of a rock or stone for hundreds of miles. Fine soil will never make hard roads when rain is falling. In summer the Manchurians find it so difficult to travel that most of the time they stay at home and look after the crops.

The few carts that travel over the soft roads in summer cut deep ruts. In the fall the country dries up and then freezes. A traveler, starting out in the winter, takes a two-wheeled native Chinese cart without springs, and goes bumping over the rough frozen roads. Each big wheel has four heavy spokes, and no more, while the axle turns with the wheels. The body of the cart consists of a little floor of boards on which is set a small blue top. One horse or mule is put in the shafts. Ahead of him two or three others are harnessed abreast, and ahead of them two or three more. Passenger carts generally have five horses. Freight carts, which are larger and have no tops, usually have seven horses. The horses are all driven with a very long whip like a fishing pole, and without bridle, bit, or reins. The drivers hang their feet over the front edge of the cart, and direct the

leaders by yelling at them or by hitting them with the whip in just the right place. When a person who is not used to the whip tries to use it, he almost invariably hits several horses at a time. Then they all try to go in different directions, and soon there is a runaway.

The winter is the season for traveling and sometimes a thousand carts a day are seen on important routes. Some carry beans, bean oil, tobacco, wheat, or millet. Others are loaded with silk, opium, and furs. All the drivers are dressed in furs or in quilted gowns of cotton.



A Chinese military parade to welcome a Manchurian governor

Many have diamond-shaped pieces of woolen cloth tied from ear to ear across their faces to keep their noses from freezing. Others wear masks with no opening except for the eyes. Many protect their feet by means of large leather shoes stuffed with soft grass to keep out the cold. If a man has a beard, he must take care that it does not freeze tight to his coat and mask.

A Manchurian Inn. At night the traveler stops at an inn, a large, fairly clean building with one big room inside and stables outside. Either side of the room is bordered by a raised platform of dry mud, where

travelers sit to get warm. Such platforms are very common in China. Under them the people burn wood, or more often weeds, the smoke of which goes all around underneath and then through a little chimney to the outside. The platform becomes pleasantly warm, and makes a fine place on which to sleep during the bitterly cold winter.

Robbers. One night when a traveler was staying at such an inn, he heard a great shouting and the sound of gun shots and of the hoofs of galloping horses. Two carts came thundering down the road and dashed into the courtyard of the inn, just as the owner slammed the gate shut and bolted it. All the guests came running out crying, "Hun-hu-tze! Hun-hu-tze!" which means "red-beards," and also "robbers." Many shots were fired, and one man in the courtyard was wounded and a horse was killed. Then the robbers heard that there was a European in the inn and ran away. But before they went, they took all the money from the people in three carts that had not succeeded in getting into the courtyard before the gates were shut.

The next day the traveler saw some Chinese soldiers taking two prisoners to Mukden. They were robbers who had been captured, and were to be killed as a punishment. In Manchuria robbery has for many years been a regular profession, although now it is being stopped by the Japanese and Russians. In the old days the Chinese thought Manchuria a cold, desolate place. So, when anyone had done some wrong thing at home in China, the officials sent him off to this poor country as a punishment. In this way Manchuria came to have many bad men, who, for lack of a better means of earning a living, began to rob the peaceful settlers. Soon the robbers banded themselves together, and

instituted a regular system by which everyone had to pay them so much, or else be robbed. Not long ago they became so powerful that all travelers by cart and all junks going down the rivers in summer paid a regular fee for the sake of being let alone. A robber soldier, with a red flag bearing the word "Vengeance" in Chinese, would stop fifty carts at a time; and each one would pay him something. ▲

Wild Animals. At the inn where the robbers ran away from the European, there was a man from the high mountains in the eastern part of Manchuria. When the traveler questioned him, he said, "Oh, I come from the mountains, where for miles and miles there is nothing to be seen except beautiful woods. The whole country is full of animals. I have killed bears and foxes and wolves, and many other kinds of game. There are so many wild animals that it is a religious duty for everyone to kill them. The best animals are the tigers. I shot one last month. Now I am taking its skin down to Mukden to sell to a Chinese official. I have its bones, too, because the Chinese pay good prices for them to grind up and use as medicine."

Dog Farms. While he was talking, another man from the foot of the mountains came up and said, "I am carrying dogskins to market. You see it is so cold in our part of the country, far to the north, that the dogs have very thick, fine hair. So we raise a great many of them for fur. They forage around and find food for themselves much of the time, but we give them some millet every day, not good millet, but that which is too poor for either horses or men. When a girl is married, her father often gives her five or six dogs, and with those a family can almost make a living. When we kill the animals we not only sell the skins, but eat the meat."

Products of Manchuria. In another man's cart the traveler saw a great deal of frozen meat. Part of it was deer's meat or venison, and part was frozen sparrows and frogs, which only rich people eat. Another cart was full of pork. There are a great many pigs in Manchuria, and all of them are black. The driver of the meat cart, like the majority of Manchurians, lived on bread made of millet. Although



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*A merchant's son, in Manchuria,
delivering a bale of rice*

beans are the greatest export of the country, millet is the chief food. It grows in large heads at the top of long stalks like those of corn. Many of the carts on the road were loaded with millet stalks to be used for fuel. Others had beans in baskets constructed of matting made from millet. Millet is also used to make an intoxicating drink like rum, which is much used by the Manchurians. Without the millet and beans most of the Manchurians would not know how to live. They have many other kinds of farm products, however, and are beginning to grow wheat, which thrives in this region and is rapidly becoming an important crop. Everything that grows in the northeastern part of the United States grows, or could be made to grow, in Manchuria.

The Population of Manchuria. Manchuria is a large region, almost equal in size to New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. It has nearly half as many inhabitants as all these states together.



*A Chinese soldier
on duty in the
provinces*

In the east the high mountains contain very few people. The whole region is wooded. Most of the people are either hunters, lumberers, or gold miners. The center of Manchuria consists wholly of rich river plains, and here the population is very dense. Except in the large towns the inhabitants are almost all farmers. In the west the plains are made of loess, a fine soil brought by the winds, and are so dry that there are not many farms. The people are not numerous; some of them are nomads like the Mongols farther west.

The Manchus. Most of the inhabitants of Manchuria are Chinese, who have come into the country during the last fifty years or more. Only a small number belong to the race of the Manchus, the original people of Manchuria. About three hundred years ago the Manchus conquered China, and now the Chinese Emperor and many of the highest officials are Manchus. Manchu men look much like Chinese men, although they are usually taller and stronger. Manchu women do not dress exactly like Chinese women. They do not bind their feet when they are girls and, therefore, are able to walk around easily. Many of them wear wooden shoes three or four inches high, which make them look much taller than they really are.

The Political Condition of Manchuria. At the present

time Manchuria is in an uncomfortable political condition. The country belongs to China; but Russia and Japan both exert a great deal of influence upon it. Russia wants to control a route through Manchuria to the harbors on the southern coast which, unlike those of Siberia, are open all the year and not frozen up six months. Japan thinks that it would be dangerous for her if Russia controlled Manchuria. Moreover, her own country is too small for all of her people. She cannot raise food enough at home, but must buy food from abroad; and no market is so convenient as the splendid wheat fields of Manchuria. From them she can bring food, or to them her people can go as colonists, unless some nation like Russia shuts her out. Since the war between Japan and Russia, in 1904 and 1905, Japanese influence has been very strong in the southern part of Manchuria to a point north of Mukden, and Russian influence has been strong farther north. Neither country is supposed to own Manchuria. Each, however, claims part of the railroad, and so keeps soldiers there to protect the line and the stations.

CHAPTER XVII

CHOSEN (KOREA): THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM

Japanese Influence. Chosen, like Manchuria, is a country which has given rise to quarrels among her neighbors—China, Russia, and Japan. In the old days, centuries ago, Chosen, then called Korea, was ruled by China; and the Koreans obtained from the Chinese the Buddhist religion, as well as various customs and arts. Many of these things they passed on to Japan. Now, just the opposite is happening. Chosen has passed under the protection of Japan, and has finally become a part of the Japanese Empire. The Korean government has been overturned and the country is now ruled by Japanese officials. Consequently, the Japanese are teaching the Koreans and Chinese many things about government and science which they, themselves, have learned from Europe and America. It is natural that Chosen should be a sort of halfway kingdom. It is not Japanese and it is not Chinese, but it has many customs which have been learned from each of its neighbors. It is completely separated from the two by the sea and by mountains, and yet it lies very close to both.

The Korean Mountains. Chosen is a wonderfully beautiful country. In the north the splendid range of the Ever-White Mountains lifts its densely-wooded heights to an elevation of 8,700 feet above the sea. Mile after mile one can travel among primeval forests, which clothe the sides of deep, picturesque valleys and high mountain ridges. Among the trees wild animals still wander, just as in the Manchurian mountains farther

north. A few tigers, still here, are hunted by men who make a business of selling the skins, or the claws for rich



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Seoul from the south gate. In the background may be seen the French and American churches

Korean women to carry in their purses as charms to prevent ill luck. In a large part of northern Chosen the mountains rise so high that the temperature is too cold for extensive agriculture, and the population cannot be large. The height of the mountains and their relatively uninhabited character make it difficult to cross from the plains of Manchuria to the more habitable central and southern parts of Chosen. Hence, the boundary between the two countries has become fixed in this region. Some day the lofty trees will doubtless be cut for lumber; and miners will come into the region, for the high mountains are full of gold and other minerals.

As one advances southward, the Korean mountains decrease in height and become correspondingly more habitable. The main chain runs near the east coast. On that side the slopes are very steep, and only a small amount of land is flat enough to cultivate. On the west minor mountain ranges run irregularly toward the sea, inclosing between them lovely valleys where the soil is fertile and agriculture highly profitable. Here village after village is inhabited by a contented, happy population of Koreans. The richness of the land, the beauty of the scenery, and the delightful character of the climate furnish almost ideal surroundings.

Summer and Winter Seasons. In winter the prevailing winds blow out from the continent of Asia, as they do in Manchuria. In Chosen, however, they are not biting cold as they are farther west. Having crossed the waters of the Yellow Sea, they have been warmed somewhat. Hence, although the winter climate is crisp and invigorating and there is plenty of frost, the cold is not benumbing as it is on the main continent. In crossing the Yellow Sea the winds do not have time to gather much moisture. Hence, there is relatively little rain or snow in winter, and the almost perpetually clear skies make that season delightful. The summers, too, are very pleasant. The winds then blow from the ocean toward the land, and bring with them a fair amount of moisture. During July and August and part of September the weather is warm and muggy and the rainfall is quite heavy. Still, it is rarely so hot or damp that one cannot walk or exercise with comfort. The fact that Chosen gets its rainfall chiefly in summer is of great benefit, for the abundant supply of water in midsummer causes vegetation to grow luxuriantly. The mountain slopes are so damp that a species of wild rice grows without

irrigation. Ordinary rice is grown in large quantities. Occasionally the summer rains are insufficient and the rice crop fails, bringing famine upon the land.

The Korean Coast. Except in the north where the Ever-White Mountains block the end of the peninsula, Chosen is completely surrounded by the sea. Hundreds of thousands, or even one or two million years ago, the region now occupied by the Yellow Sea was dry land which stretched from Shantung across to Chosen and thence to Japan. Then the land, with all its fertile valleys and plains, sank beneath the ocean. Little by little, during thousands of years, the water kept coming in over the land. The plains became broad expanses of blue sea, the surrounding hills became islands, and the valleys at the foot of the mountains, deep bays and gulfs.

To-day the coasts of Chosen, especially on the west and south, may be called drowned, like those of Asia Minor. On the west coast hundreds of lovely islands rise steep and wooded from the bluest of seas. Some are only small rocks; others are so large that thousands of people live upon them, in the valleys and small plains between the great forested mountains. Here and there, deep bays run many miles into the land. As the bays have wide mouths and narrow heads, the tide rises very high—twenty feet in most places and forty feet in some. At low tide great mud flats lie bare, and reefs and rocks are seen on every side. On such a shore boats meet with many dangers. So in the past the Chinese have generally come to Chosen by the hard land route through Manchuria rather than brave the dangers of the sea. Now that steamers are in use and people have learned to build lighthouses and to make good maps of dangerous places, it is much easier to sail the Korean seas.



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Fusan: looking northwest across the native section

On the southeast coast the tides are not so high, and the harbors are much better than on the west. Hence, communication with Japan has always been fairly easy and Japanese ships now come in large numbers to the port of Fusan. In this part of Chosen the people naturally have many Japanese habits, while on the other side of the country Chinese customs are more prevalent.

The Fisher Folk of Chosen. The tides of Chosen have done much to isolate the Koreans by preventing them from being a seafaring people. In Asia Minor the many islands and bays produced by drowning caused the inhabitants to become great sailors. In Chosen this did not happen, because the tides are so strong that it is very difficult to use boats, except in the rivers.

In the rivers and quieter waters of the west coast the Koreans use small boats a great deal for fishing, but dare not go out to sea with them. Most of the fishing is done on the east coast, where there has not been so much drowning of the land and where the tides are not nearly so high as on the west coast. As one comes near to one of the many fishing villages, people are seen walking about, dressed in white and wearing big straw hats. Seen from a distance the white clothes are pretty, but near at hand they almost always appear dirty and unattractive. The little fishing villages also look pretty from a distance, especially when seen from the sea with the universal Korean background of fine trees. Close at hand they are seen to consist of small, untidy houses facing in all directions and not separated by proper streets. All are low, with only one story. The roofs are thatched with bundles of straw projecting far out over the walls. Sometimes a rich man's house has a pretty roof of red tiles, but that is not common except near the cities. Near each village the

white sandy beach is covered for long distances with black fish, which are being dried in the sun. A most disagreeable smell comes from them, and one wonders how even the fishermen can endure it.



*Winnowing grain in the streets of
Chemulpo*

Korean Food.

The dried fish are sent to all parts of the country and everyone uses them. Often they are eaten without being cooked. The Koreans think no more of eating raw fish than we think of eating raw cabbage. Sometimes

when a man goes fishing in one of the rivers, instead of

having a basket in which to put the fish, he has beside him a little dish of pepper and other spices. When he catches a fish he cleans it and then, without any cooking at all, dips it into the pepper and eats it. Some of the other Korean ways of preparing food are very different from ours. For instance, a chicken is sometimes cooked entire, with the feathers, head, and claws. Most of the people live on rice and beans. In the north, where it is a little too cold for rice to grow, they eat a kind of sorghum which is often called millet.

Korean Hairdressing. When a foreigner first sees a

group of Koreans in their loose white clothes, he notices that some of them are men with thin beards on their faces and with their black hair done up in little topknots on the crowns of their heads. Others, whom he takes to be women, have their hair hanging down their backs in long black braids. Soon, however, he sees that some of the supposed women are not women at all, but unmarried boys and young men. When Koreans are married they change the way of wearing their hair. The women arrange theirs in curls and loops, while the men cut off most of theirs and have the rest done up in topknots. The hair thus cut off is usually sold. Part of it goes to China for use in lengthening Chinese cues. When a young man or woman is to be married, the best friends are asked to arrange the hair; so that in Chosen the "hairedresser" means what we mean by the "bridesmaid" or the "groomsman."

All Koreans want to be married. As long as single, both men and women are treated as children. They may be married at only fourteen or fifteen years of age, but thereafter they are treated as if grown up. The boy puts on a man's hat, and the girl goes to live in the secluded rooms of the women of her husband's family.

Korean Homes. A journey in Chosen is very pleasant. Recently several railroads have been built, but in most places one travels on horseback. In some districts no horses can be secured, so the traveler uses oxen or else walks and has his baggage carried on the backs of men or women. Everywhere the people are friendly. If a stranger comes to a village, Mr. Kim or Mr. Ni invites him into his little house. It may be a poor place with a mud floor, or with only strong mats of paper or bamboo to sit upon; but the Koreans will make him welcome. The women keep out of the way, for it is considered very

improper for a woman to let herself be seen by any men except those of her own family. In the cities the women



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A bull driver bringing wood into Sŏul

formerly were obliged to stay in the houses all day, but after sunset when it was dark, so that they could not be seen, they were permitted to go through the streets with their small warning lanterns. This custom is being changed now. Most of the women, however, still lead a dull life, for women are despised as inferiors, and are often abused. In the villages they go

about more freely than in the cities, and do more than their share of the work. The boys and girls play together, and many learn to read and write. One favorite game is played by burying a ring of wood in a pile of sand. When all is ready, every child takes a stick and pokes as rapidly as possible, trying to get the ring on his stick.

Mourning Customs. One cannot stay long in Chosen without seeing men with huge hats of plaited bamboo straw about four feet in diameter and with heavy veils wholly covering their faces. They are mourners whose fathers or mothers or near relatives have recently died.

For a number of days the mourners must go about wearing the hats and veils and carrying big clubs. At certain times for three years they must make offerings at the graves of the dead, and during all that time they are forbidden to marry. The Koreans practice ancestor worship of the same kind as that which will be described in the chapter on the Chinese.

The Love of Nature. The beauty of the forested mountains and drowned seacoasts of Chosen has instilled in the people a great love of nature. The Koreans, like the Japanese of whom we shall read in the next chapter, are one of the few Oriental peoples who go to summer resorts to enjoy the beauties of nature. In their summer houses the rich often have what are called "looking rooms," built especially for the purpose of commanding a beautiful view of the sea, or of a waterfall, a fine mountain peak, or a gorge. The Koreans believe that spirits of various kinds live in the brooks and trees and hills. The chief of all the spirits is the Mountain God, whom the peasants really worship, although they call themselves worshippers of Buddha. Many of the chief resorts are monasteries which Buddhist priests have built in the most beautiful parts of the mountains.

Korean Progress. Altogether the Koreans are a very pleasant people, and have a good deal of ability. They are rapidly giving up their old customs and are becoming more like the people of America and Europe. The nature of their country is such that they have many metals, fine harbors, a fruitful soil, and an excellent climate. All these things make it probable that Chosen will always be a prosperous and civilized country. One of the greatest hindrances to progress is the occasional failure of the summer rain. When this happens the rice crop is spoiled and thousands of people starve.

CHAPTER XVIII

JAPAN: THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

A Country of the Far East. In America we think of Japan as far to the west across the Pacific Ocean. The majority of the people of the world, however, think of it as the most eastern of all countries. Therefore, in Europe Japan is spoken of as part of the Far East, and the Japanese, themselves, have for ages called their country the "Land of the Rising Sun."

The Debt of Japan to Other Countries. The first inhabitants of Japan came from the mainland of Asia or from the islands of the Malay Archipelago, thousands of years ago. Until the middle of the last century Japan looked upon China as the only great civilized nation besides herself, and from China she obtained much of her civilization. Buddhism, the chief religion of Japan, was founded in India, but it was brought to the Japanese through China and Chosen. In the same way many ideas as to art and literature came through Chosen from China to Japan; and the Japanese long ago adopted the Chinese method of writing and many other peculiar customs. During the last fifty years a great change has come over Japan. Instead of learning only from China and shutting herself off from the rest of the world, she has begun to learn from Europe and America. She has to a large extent adopted our system of government, our railroads, steamships, and telegraphs, and our ways of doing business.

This does not mean that Japan is like America or Europe, nor that she is like China. She has learned many things from the rest of the world; but she is

different from all other countries. Much of the difference is due to the nature of the country, as we shall presently see. To-day Japan is the most civilized nation of Asia. Indeed, in many ways Japan is the most civilized nation in the world. Europeans and Americans have made greater progress than Japan in inventions, manufactures, and commerce, but Japan is ahead of us in equally important matters such as patriotism, filial respect, cleanliness, politeness, art, and the love of nature.



The celebrated bronze Daibutsu or image of Buddha at Kamakura near Yokohama

The Influence of the Ocean. As the traveler from America approaches Yokohama, the chief port of Japan on the Pacific Ocean, he sees at once that the country is very beautiful. Lovely green islands rise from the blue water and are capped by clean, white lighthouses. On the mainland densely-wooded mountains rise directly from the shores or from narrow, highly-cultivated plains. Fair bays and gulfs extend far into the land; and it is evident that the coast of Japan, like that of Chosen, has in some past time sunk and been drowned, so that now the sea has come into the valleys. Hundreds of white sailboats show that the Japanese are a seafaring people. Most of the boats are used in catching fish. When

a strong wind comes up and threatens to overturn the boats, the fishermen do not shorten their sails as we do, by lowering the top and tying a reef. Instead of this, they make the surface exposed to the wind narrower than before, by unlacing and taking off one of the vertical strips of cloth of which each sail is composed. When people hear of customs like this, they often say that the Japanese are topsy-turvy. We are just as much topsy-turvy, for the Japanese way is often exactly as good as ours, and sometimes better.

The Navy of Japan. Since Japan is wholly surrounded by water, she cannot be strong among the nations of the world unless she has many ships. Therefore Japan, like England, is constantly developing her navy. The country is not very rich, and has hard work to get enough money to buy warships, which cost several million dollars apiece. Her people are very patriotic, however, and cheerfully pay taxes for the good of the country. The Japanese make fine sailors, and because of this the naval power of the country

is growing.

The Volcano of Fuji. When ocean steamers come near to Yokohama, the passengers always come out on deck, not only to see the beautiful scenery near at hand, but in the hope of seeing Fuji-san, or Fuji Mountain, which is frequently



A Japanese junk

called Fuji-yama. There is no place in all Japan where one cannot see mountains if the air is fairly clear. Most of the mountains are not rough and rugged like the Alps, but soft and round and green, like the Appalachians of our southern states. Dense woods cover the lower portions, so that scarcely a rock can be seen. In the center of Japan, however, many mountains rise so high as to be bare and rocky, and of these Fuji is easily chief. It is a great volcano, more than 12,000 feet high. It is two thousand feet lower than Pikes Peak, but it rises in sight of the sea instead of from an inland plateau, and so it seems to be higher. During about half of the year its top is covered with snow, which, since the volcano is now quiet, does not melt. The Japanese are passionately fond of Fuji-san, and, in spite of the hard climb, make pilgrimages to its top. Everywhere on Japanese screens or bowls, or in pictures, the cone of Fuji is drawn, sometimes pure white, and sometimes pink or purple in the glow of the setting sun.

The Climate of Japan. The mixture of sea and land and the universal presence of mountains are not the only factors which render the beauty of Japan unsurpassed. The other chief factor is the climate. Japan, like the portion of the United States from northern Florida to Maine, lies upon the eastern side of a great continent, in north latitude 30° to 46° , with a large ocean bounding it on the east. Hence its climate is much like that of our Atlantic states. In the south the coast of Japan is washed by the warm Kuro Shiwo. This current, like the Gulf Stream, comes from equatorial regions and brings a large amount of heat. Winds blowing over this become warm and moist. When they reach the Japanese mountains, they rise, expand, grow cool, and give up abundant rain. This is especially

the case in summer, when strong winds blow inward toward the center of Asia. Hence, southern Japan is not only warm, but very moist. North of Tokyo, which lies near the middle of Japan, the coast trends north and south instead of northeast and southwest. Here the climate grows rapidly cooler as one goes northward, but still continues to be rainy. Yezo, the northern island, is quite cold, colder than Maine, which lies in the same latitude. The reason for this is that an Arctic current washes the northeast coast of Asia, just as one of the same sort borders the corresponding coast of North America. In America the current is partly deflected oceanward by Newfoundland. In Asia, on the contrary, it comes in full force to Yezo. Thus two opposing currents make Japan not only unexpectedly warm in the southern half, but unexpectedly cool in the north. In



*The valley through which the ascent of the volcano
Asama-yama is made*

winter the prevailing winds of Japan come from the northwest, from Siberia. They are cold and dry. In



Lava covered with ashes at the top of the volcano Asama-yama

crossing the Sea of Japan, however, they collect a fair amount of moisture, which is deposited as snow or rain, especially on the western side of the mountains. Fortunately for Japan the crest of the mountains lies nearer to the west coast than to the east, and thus the cold winds are cut off from much of the country. Naturally the side of the island exposed to the cold continental winds from Asia is less warm and productive than the southeast coast in the path of warm currents and oceanic winds. Consequently, the population of Japan is densest in the south along the eastern coast. In all parts of Japan the rainfall is sufficient to support abundant forests. In the most densely-populated parts the growth of trees is highly luxuriant.

The Effect of Scenery. The mountains of Japan, the fair valleys, and the beautiful coasts, joined with the

abundant forests and the splendid flowering trees and shrubs which are fostered by the warm, damp climate, have helped to make the Japanese the most artistic people in the world. Everybody, old and young, will stop to look at a pretty flower, a bright sunset, or a white cascade. In this respect we are barbarians compared with them, and they cannot help looking down upon us. Our guide books boast of the size and cost of our great buildings, the length of our railroads, and the vastness of our commerce. Theirs tell the traveler that a certain lake is most beautiful when the lotus ~~lily~~ is in bloom or that the time to visit a valley is when the light of the full moon may be seen upon the snow. Unfortunately the Japanese are forgetting some of their love of beauty, and are devoting much energy to the mad rush for wealth and business supremacy.

The Dress and Appearance of the Japanese. Before we discuss Japan further, let us see how her people appear. The city streets are full of little people dressed in sober, tasteful colors, mostly brown and blue. A few wear European clothes, but they do not look half so well as those in the true Japanese dress. Almost everyone is bareheaded, and it is noticeable that all the hair is jet black. That of the men is cut short, while that of the women is tied up in shining rolls covered with oil to keep it in place. The skin of all the people is smooth and of a yellowish-olive tint. Some of the children and country women have red cheeks, while the cheeks and lips of the city women are very much painted. The outer dress of all alike consists of a kimono—a long, loose sack with very large sleeves. The men wear small girdles or sashes, and the women large ones tied in huge bows behind. The children, even the little ones three years old, are dressed exactly like their fathers

and mothers, in loose and graceful clothing. In the country the men, and occasionally the women, who are hard at work in the rice fields or elsewhere, often wear nothing above the waist. The people are sensible, and dress for their work so they do not have to think about their clothes while laboring in the fields.

Shoes Made by the Carpenter. The streets are very



A toy-trumpet peddler. Note that he is wearing wooden clogs

clean in dry weather, because no one is allowed to throw anything into them and there are no horses. As the Japanese walk along the streets, one hears a peculiar click, click, click. The sound comes from the wooden clogs, two or three inches high, which almost everyone wears. It is hard to walk in them, because they are so high and are so likely to fall off when not carefully fastened on. For this reason many of the Japanese, especially the women, have an awkward, shuffling gait. Coolies and people who are at work do not wear clogs. They are useful, because in rainy weather the streets get very muddy, and the clogs keep people out of the mud. Perhaps the Japanese would have leather shoes if they had cows and oxen, as we do, to furnish skins from which to make them. They have little leather, for reasons which we shall see later, and so the shoemakers use wood.

The Cause of the Industry of the Japanese. Let us turn back now to the mountains, the sea, and the climate of Japan, and see what influence these physical factors have had upon the gracefully-dressed little people in the wooden shoes. In spite of their beauty, the mountains are in some ways a hindrance to the progress of the country. They take up so much room that there is not much space where people can live and work. Plains are few and small and are located chiefly near the coast, with only a few in the interior. In the plains the population is very dense. In the mountainous parts of the country no one can live except in the narrow valleys; so in all these parts the population is scanty. Not more than one-sixth of the whole country can be used for farms.

Japan is somewhat larger than the United Kingdom, but the amount of land from which people can get food is only a little more than half as much as in that country. Yet the number of people in Japan is much greater than in Great Britain and Ireland. For many years the United Kingdom has brought from other countries a large part of the food for her people. Japan has not done this until within a few years. Therefore in the past it has been very hard to get enough food for all her inhabitants. Every bit of ground that could bear crops has been used; and it has been necessary for everybody to work very hard. The people have done everything possible to enrich the soil, and to use all the plants and animals that can be made to furnish food. In this way the Japanese have become extremely industrious and economical. They work hard from morning until night, except on festival days. They use many unusual articles of food, such as seaweed, cuttlefish, whales, green bamboo tips, and other things which the nations of Europe and America have

never learned to employ, because they have not felt the need of using every possible kind of food.

Fishing. It would be a bad thing for the Japanese if they could not eat fish. People need some food like meat which contains what are called proteids, substances full of nitrogen. Fish contains abundant proteids, and takes the place of other kinds of meat in Japan. Except in the remote interior, one can hardly go to a dinner where fish are not served in two or three different ways, both cooked and raw. That seems to us a queer habit, but it is no more queer than the American habit of eating mouldy cheese. In order that the fish may be fresh, they are kept in water until they are sold. Many miles from the sea, one often meets two men walking along with a great tub of live fish between them, hanging from a pole laid across their shoulders. Since animals for food are so rare, it is fortunate for Japan that the drowning of her coasts has formed so many islands, large and small, and so many bays and gulfs which make fishing easy. There are probably more kinds of fish on the coast of Japan than in any other area of the same size in the world.

Cormorant Fishing. Sometimes a traveler has the good fortune to see Japanese fishermen using cormorants. The cormorant fishers go out at night in small boats, carrying bright torches. A very skillful fisherman has twelve birds. Cormorants are black, and resemble large sea gulls with long beaks, on the lower side of which are natural sacks in which the birds can stow away several fish. Cormorants are very greedy. Each bird has a cord fastened around its body and a loose metal ring around its throat. Holding the cords in his hand, the fisherman puts the birds into the water one by one, always in exactly the same order, beginning with the youngest. He takes them out from the water in the

opposite order, the oldest first, so that the young birds do the most work. The birds are so used to this order that they fight fiercely if it is changed, and the old birds punish the young ones for being in the wrong place. When all the birds are in the water, they swim quickly about in every direction, looking for fish. The fisherman has to be very skillful to keep the cords from becoming twisted. When a bird catches a fish it tries to swallow it, but unless the fish is small this is impossible because of the ring around the neck. If the fish is not swallowed, the bird keeps it in the bag under its beak. When the fisherman sees that the bags are full, he pulls in the birds, opens their beaks, and takes out the fish that have been caught. The fish are put into a tub of water, and the birds are let loose to catch more. Sometimes a single bird has been known to catch one hundred fifty fish in an hour, but this is uncommon.

A Dinner without a Dining Room. Now that we are discussing food, let us see how the Japanese take their meals and what they eat besides fish. There are no dining rooms in Japanese houses; or perhaps we ought to say that every room is a dining room. People sleep, sit, work, and eat in the same rooms. At a Japanese inn or hotel, if a guest wants his dinner, he claps his hands or calls out, and some one answers "Hai!" Then a good-tempered, smiling girl comes with a little round table and sets it before him. On it she puts tiny cups of tea and thin little cakes slightly sweetened. Fine tea grows in Japan, and everyone drinks it in enormous quantities, but always out of small cups, and very slowly. Occasionally out of the most delicate tea leaves, that have been pounded, rich people actually make a kind of soup. It is bitter and is very bad for the nerves. As soon as a child is old enough to have anything but milk, he begins to drink tea.

Japanese Food. When the dinner comes on, it consists of food which foreigners think very insipid until they



Japanese women buying supplies from a vegetable cart

become used to it. Sweetmeats of sugared beans, sweet rice, or perhaps chrysanthemum leaves are brought as the first course. Then come soups, boiled fish, raw fish, boiled vegetables, pickled vegetables, and at last plain boiled rice, which forms the main part of the meal. What we call dessert always comes first, and the main substantial food last. The Japanese eat large quantities of pickles of many kinds, partly because the rice, of which they eat so much, is rather tasteless, and partly because people need sour or acid foods in hot, damp weather. In the country one of the commonest kinds of food is pickled radishes. These radishes are as big as a man's arm and are pure white. When pickled they smell most horribly—as bad as our Limburger cheese. The Japanese have a story of a blind man who had saved some money and hid it in a jar of pickled radish. A thief stole it. The blind man did not know what to do

until suddenly a thought struck him. He made his friends call all the villagers and set them in a row. Then he began to smell of their hands, and so found the thief who had put his hand in the pickles.

Rice Culture. The Japanese eat rice even more than we eat bread. It is raised in all the lowland regions and upon terraces among the mountains. The rice plant requires a great deal of water. If Japan were not so rainy in summer, rice could not be raised so universally. It would not be possible to support so many people, for other plants, such as wheat, need more space in order to produce the same amount of food. The rice is planted in May or June in fields of half-liquid mud. After it has grown up two or three inches, it is transplanted into rows. Water is turned on to it from the brooks and rivers, and it lives most of the time in standing water. Women wade among the rows and keep out the weeds most carefully. The water of rice fields is full of short eels, which the Japanese are very fond of eating.

Other Japanese Crops. Besides rice there are many other important products in Japan. One of the most famous is silk, obtained from the cocoons of caterpillars which are fed on leaves cut from the cultivated mulberry tree. The bamboo is one of the commonest of plants. From it the Japanese are able to make screens, hats, mats, sails for junks, pipes, paper, and ever so many other useful things. The camphor tree, also, is very valuable. The camphor is obtained from it by cutting the roots and stems into small pieces and boiling them. Still another famous plant is the lacquer tree, in which gashes are cut to allow the sap to flow out. From this is made the lacquer which we see so often on Japanese bowls. It is usually black, although it can be painted all manner of beautiful colors. This strange varnish will not grow

hard in dry places, but has to be put in a damp place in order to harden and become dry.

The Size of the Japanese. The Japanese are the shortest of all peoples aside from the pigmies of Africa. When one gets on a Japanese train, it seems as if all the railroad officials were boys. Very few of the Japanese men have mustaches or beards; and this, joined with their short stature, makes them look very young. On an average the grown men are only as tall as American boys of about fourteen, and the women are still shorter. Almost everything in Japan is small in size.

Jinrikishas: the Japanese "Pull-man Cars." When the traveler leaves the railroad station at such a place as Tokyo, the capital, he finds the streets full of little two-wheeled buggies like big baby carriages. Between the shafts stand short men called coolies, dressed in thin blue clothes which leave the arms and legs bare.



A Japanese street scene. Notice the jinrikishas

In his cloth girdle each man carries a blue towel with which to wipe the perspiration from his forehead. At



A Japanese cart carrying manure to fertilize the fields

the back of the jinrikisha, or "man-power cart," as the big baby carriage is called, there is a very broad straw hat which the coolie puts on when it rains. The rest of the time he goes bareheaded. Instead of getting into an electric car or into a carriage the traveler takes a jinrikisha, and away goes the coolie trot-

ting through the streets. Sometimes if the road is hilly or long, two coolies are in the shafts and one pushes behind. At first a foreigner feels very queer to be pulled around like a baby, but soon he gets used to it. In the streets scarcely a horse can be seen. Even heavy loads are pulled and pushed by men, four men sometimes being necessary for one cart. The distances that the men can trot are wonderful. It is a common thing for a man to go forty or fifty miles in a single day, trotting steadily all the way with a jinrikisha behind him.

Scarcity of Horses and of Food Supply for Men. Until one understands the geography of Japan, it seems very odd that so civilized a nation should let men do the work of horses. There is a good reason for this, however. In the first place, horses and cows and sheep

and other animals which eat grass do not thrive in Japan. On the mountains, which occupy so large a part of the country, there is very little grass. The abundant summer rains, caused by the monsoons which blow in from the Pacific Ocean, make the country so wet that trees and bamboos and other large, coarse plants grow splendidly. In fact they grow so well that small grasses do not have an opportunity. Down in the plains, where the forests are cleared off, it would be possible to raise grass and grain for animals; but all the space is needed to raise food for the people. To raise food enough for one horse requires a space large enough to supply food for several men. If the Japanese used horses, some of the people would have to starve. So it is better to feed the people and let them do all the work.

A few parts of Japan have a good many horses. These are the colder regions on the northwest coast among the mountains, and up in the northern island of Yezo where the climate is much like that of New England. In these places grass grows abundantly. There are not so many people in these regions as in other parts of Japan. In Yezo the horses run half wild much of the time. When they are kept in stables their heads are where the tails of our horses are. A horse is backed into his stall and led out, as is customary with us only in our fire-engine houses. It is much easier to feed horses when they are fastened in this way, and the danger of being kicked is much less than when they are tied in our fashion.

The Scarcity of Meat. What has just been said about the scarcity of grass and of animals which eat grass explains why the Japanese eat little meat and much fish. They cannot eat meat because they cannot raise the necessary animals. A few years ago it was the fashion

in Japan to imitate European and American customs. Many people tried to eat meat. It was sold by the *ounce* instead of by the *pound*, as with us. On the whole the people do not care much for it, and it is used chiefly in the cities. In addition to the scarcity of animals there is another reason why beef is not eaten. The Japanese are mostly Buddhists, although not very faithful ones, and Buddhism forbids the killing of animals, especially of cows and oxen. In India it forbids the killing of fish and birds also; but the Japanese do not pay any attention to this, and fish and birds are part of their regular diet.

A good story is told of some Japanese hunters, who live among the mountains and hunt deer. A traveler noticed that they ate the meat of the deer. "Don't you know that your religion forbids you to eat such meat?" "Oh no, it doesn't," they answered. "The deer is not an animal, but a fish." "How can that be?" asked the traveler. "The deer looks like an animal to me." "Oh," was the reply, "you don't know much about our language. In Japanese one name of deer is 'mountain whale.' So the whale is a fish, and we are allowed to eat fish."

Houses Whose Walls Are All Windows. In Japan it is not surprising to find the shops all having the whole front open to the street. That is the case in most parts of Asia. It is very surprising, however, to see many of the houses open. They look as though they consisted of nothing but heavy roofs supported by pillars. Looking inside them, one sees in one house a mother cooking dinner over a little square pot full of charcoal, while two children are playing on the white floor. In another a girl is dressing, and a man is plaiting a mat out of bamboo straw. In still another place a family is eating dinner, resting on their knees on the floor, each one with a little square table

a foot high before him. In a neighboring building a great many people are bathing, men on one side and women on the other. No one seems to care at all that the houses are open. The people in the streets pay no attention to what is happening in the houses, and those in the houses do not seem to know that any one can see them. It is all part of the great politeness of the Japanese. Many people think that the open character of the houses is one reason why the Japanese are so polite. They are obliged to "have on their company manners," as we say, all the time. A boy cannot be very polite to his sister on the street and slap her at home, as he sometimes does in America; neither can a girl have a sweet smile in company and a sulky face at home. At least, if either of them does these things all the neighbors will know it.

The Japanese houses have walls of a sort, as one sees plainly at night. The walls are merely thin paper screens for the inner parts of the house and heavy woodenshutters for the outside. The shutters are something like those which we have on the outside of shop windows, except that they move sidewise instead of up and down. When they are up, the houses are dark



The interior of a Japanese house, showing mats, screens, and open walls

and little air can get in. Therefore they must be taken down every day. In many cases, when the shutters



Hotels in the beautiful Nikko region. Notice the shutters

have all been taken down, the smaller houses are quite open and people can look in from the street. Of course there are now in Japan many houses like those in America, but these are not common outside of the large cities. The inside of a Japanese house can be divided into as many rooms as the owner happens to choose on any particular day. The floor is covered with beautiful, thick mats of yellowish rice straw. They are all of just the same size and shape—about six feet long by three feet wide, and three inches thick. Paper screens are made to slide between the mats, dividing the house into oblong or square rooms of any desired size. The Japanese speak of a room as being so many mats in size. Thus an eight-mat room is one having eight mats to cover its floor. It can be divided into two four-mat rooms, or can be joined to others to form a larger room.

Monsoon Rains and the Necessity for Open Houses.

The openness of the houses is almost a necessity. In summer the monsoon rains fall heavily, especially on the Pacific coast from Sendai to Tokyo and westward, where most of the people live. This region, as we have seen, is so far south and is washed by such a strong ocean current from the equator that the summers are very warm. Therefore, from June to September the air is wet and sticky a large part of the time. If shoes or clothes are put away in boxes, they mold in a few days. It is necessary for the houses to be open in order to keep them sweet and fresh.

Earthquakes and Houses. Earthquakes as well as the monsoon rains have a good deal to do with the way in which Japanese houses are built. Japan is the land of earthquakes. Scarcely a week passes without a small one in some region, and during some years there have been as many as two thousand. Most are too small to do any damage or even to be felt except by delicate



One of the temples of Nikko

instruments; but many are strong enough to shake down houses, especially if they are built stiffly like ours, with solid walls. The light Japanese houses are not easily shaken down because they have no stiff walls. Even if they do fall, the loss is slight, since they are very inexpensive. Only the roof is heavy enough to hurt people if it falls on them. In Japan it would be foolish to build heavy buildings of stone. This explains why Japan has so few wonderful temples or public buildings like those of Greece, the only European country whose people were ever so artistic as those of Japan. If they wished to use stone, the Japanese could get it, provided they took a good deal of trouble; but they do not need it. The heavy summer rains and the warm summer climate cause trees of all kinds to grow luxuriantly, and the light, strong bamboo is found almost everywhere. Thus it is easy to find splendid material for houses adapted to a land of earthquakes.

Typhoons and Heavy Roofs. Foreigners often wonder at the great roofs of Japanese houses, which look very top-heavy. Often the wide-spreading roof is first put together on the ground. Then it is taken to pieces; the slender lower part of the house is built, and finally the roof is put together again in its proper place. The roofs need to be heavy, partly to keep out the rain and partly to prevent the houses from being blown away by typhoons. The typhoons are tremendous storms of wind and rain which sweep up the Pacific coast from the Philippine Islands. The rain falls in drenching floods and the wind blows furiously. The Japanese houses seem queer to us, and they would be queer in America; but in a country of heavy summer rains, earthquakes, and typhoons they are much more sensible than houses of our style would be.

Fires and "Godowns." Japanese houses take fire very easily. If a match is dropped on one of the thick mats, a fire is likely to start, and nothing can readily stop it. One house of light wood and straw sets another on fire, and not infrequently burn whole villages. In Tokyo there have been several fires in which 10,000 houses were burned. As the houses are inexpensive and can be built again quickly, the loss from fire is nothing



A coolie dressed in his straw rain coat and hat

like as large as it would be in America. Of course when there is a fire, everything that is in the house is destroyed. Accordingly, the Japanese keep most of their valuable property in fireproof, air-tight buildings made of plaster. After a fire these "godowns," as they are called by foreigners, all remain standing uninjured. Sometimes the owners of houses keep all the wood and mats for a new house ready in the godown. A house can be put up so quickly after a fire that the Japanese jokingly say that if a man hurries too much in rebuilding his burned house, the same fire which burned the first one will come back with a different wind and burn the second.

Japanese Furniture and Shoes. In a Japanese house there is almost no furniture. The people sleep on the mats which form the floor, putting a quilt or two below them and others above them for warmth. They sit on

the floor to read or write or talk, squatting always on their knees with their feet under them. As a rule Japanese houses are beautifully clean. There are, of course, some dirty people, but not many. Upon entering a Japanese house one must take off his shoes. It would never do to walk over the clean mats with dirty feet. It would be like walking on the beds and chairs in our houses. That is one reason why wooden shoes are worn so universally. They keep people's feet up out of the mud, and they can be taken off easily and left at the door when one enters a house.

The Japanese tell a good story of a man from the country who had never seen a railroad train. When he was to travel on a train for the first time, he took off his shoes before getting in and left them on the platform, just as he would at the door of a friend's house. At the end of his journey he was much surprised not to find them outside the door at the foot of the steps. He thought that the platform and station went along with the train.

Ornaments in the Houses. The Japanese have many beautiful ornaments, but they do not fill their houses with them as we do. A man who owns several fine pictures brings out one at a time and keeps it in the house for a while and then changes it for another. This custom has grown up because it is not safe to keep valuable articles in the houses, where they are in great danger of being burned. Although the custom had so commonplace an origin, it has had a fine effect upon the Japanese. It has taught them that there is more pleasure in one beautiful thing which is really studied than in a hundred which are merely set out for show. If a beautiful picture or a rare piece of china is brought out, the whole family enjoy it for a few days or weeks, and learn to appreciate its beauty. The Japanese think

that we have very poor taste, because we want to fill our houses with ornaments. Often we do not care whether the ornaments are genuinely beautiful, provided they make a show. When the Japanese bring an ornament into their houses, they do it because they love beauty. A man may have a thousand precious objects of art, but his house is almost as simple as that of his neighbor who has only ten. This way of life saves the Japanese a great amount of fretting and worry and jealousy.

The Love of Flowers. Since the people of Japan have learned to be simple in their houses, they are simple in other things, but they are always artistic. We often arrange flowers in big, gaudy bouquets with the flowers all pushed together. They think that a single loose spray is much more beautiful than any more crowded arrangement. We value flowers that are out of season, and think that the winter roses or pinks, which cost a small fortune, are the most beautiful. They think that flowers are most beautiful at the time when they naturally bloom. It is not in good taste to decorate the house with flowers which are out of season.

The art of decoration is valued so highly that part of the education of every girl of good family is a course in the arrangement of flowers. So fond are the Japanese of flowers that they have flower holidays. In the spring all the people, from the old man down to the youngest child, go out to look at the cherry blossoms. The fruit of the cherry tree is very sour and poor in Japan, and is hardly worth eating; but the people love the blossoms so much that cherry trees are cultivated everywhere. We have taught the Japanese how to build railroads, steamships, and factories, and a host of other good things; we might profitably learn from them how to enjoy beauty and how to live contentedly amid simple surroundings.

Bathing and Cleanliness. The Japanese are the cleanest people in the world. In Tokyo a quarter of the inhabitants go to one or another of the eight hundred or more large public baths every day, and most of the rest bathe daily in their own homes. A traveler once came to a village where the people are in the habit of bathing in the water of some hot springs. An old villager apologized for the dirtiness of himself and his neighbors. "We are very busy now, during the summer, and we have time to bathe only twice a day," he said. "How often do you bathe in winter?" asked the traveler. "Oh, four or five times a day," was the answer. "The children get into the bath whenever they feel cold."

Usually the baths are so hot that foreigners cannot stand the heat at first. The tubs used in private houses are round and small, only large enough to sit down in, not to lie in. The water is kept hot during the bath by a copper pipe placed at one edge and filled with burning charcoal. Sometimes the pipe is not protected by a board, and the bather has to be careful not to touch it and burn himself.

If people bathe in water which is merely warm and then go out of doors in winter, they take cold; but if the water is hot, it does no harm. One odd thing about Japanese baths is that several people bathe in the same water, one after another. This is not so bad as it seems, since no one scrubs himself in the bath but does that when he comes out.

Hot Springs. One reason for the frequent baths is that Japan contains a great number of hot springs. The country is full of volcanoes, as might be expected where earthquakes are so frequent. Near the volcanoes there are usually many springs of hot water. By using these the Japanese first found out the advantage

of hot baths. Bathing is more necessary in Japan than in many countries, for in summer the air is so warm and damp that people's clothes become wringing wet with perspiration whenever they do any active work. Hence, it is necessary to bathe often in order to keep clean and sweet. In such a climate loose clothes like those of the Japanese are far better than ours. People such as coolies who are pulling jinrikishas, or men and women who are working in the fields, become so hot and wet that they are most uncomfortable and dirty if they wear many clothes. So it is wise for them to wear as few as possible.

The Most Polite People in the World. In all the Japanese streets and everywhere else one notices how polite the people are. When two peasant acquaintances meet on the way to market, they stop and bow low several times. If two friends meet in the street, they put their hands on their knees and bow again and again, bending over till their heads are on a level with their hips, while they pull in their breath with a sucking noise, as a mark of respect. If they meet in the house, they get down on their knees and keep touching their heads to the floor. When they talk about themselves, they always say "My unworthy self!" or "My wretched house!" or use some other expression indicating that they are very poor and worthless. The other person is always spoken of as very worthy. For instance, a man invites his friend to dinner in this way: "Will your most honorable self deign to honor my miserable table with the light of your gracious presence?" Even the children use these forms, which are so common that no one thinks of them as having any special meaning. They use them just as we write "My dear sir," to a man whom we have never seen.

Japanese politeness is not confined to words. A traveler tells this story. One day he and a friend went in swimming on a very rocky part of the seashore. While they were far out in the water swimming, some workmen came along and stopped by their clothes. The traveler thought they would steal something, but his Japanese companion said not to worry. When they swam ashore, they found that the workmen had gone on, leaving two soft mats for them to dress on in place of the rough stones. The laborers would have felt insulted



*Japanese children in charge of a
child nurse*

if the bathers had offered them any money when they took the mats back after dressing. The Japanese were so polite that they really wanted the strangers to be comfortable.

Children's Games.

Japan has been called the "Children's Paradise." It is certainly a good place for them,

and they are always polite. Fathers and mothers go everywhere with their children on festival days. The best day for the girls is the "Feast of Dolls," on the third day of the third month. On that day every girl baby born during the year receives two dolls. The older girls, too, often receive presents. When a girl carries her doll, she puts it on her back inside her kimono, with its head sticking out over her shoulder. That is the way in which babies are carried. One of the things which girls enjoy most is the "cooking man," who comes around

on feast days with a toy kitchen. The stove has a real fire in it. A girl's father pays a few cents to the man, and the girl can cook griddlecakes and other foods just the right size for dolls.

The great day for boys is the "Feast of Flags," on the fifth day of the fifth month. If a boy has been born in a house during the year, a great paper fish is floated over the house. The boys receive presents of drums and swords and other warlike toys. In February and March, when it is windy, the boys fly kites. They dip the upper fifteen or twenty feet of kite string in glue and then in powdered glass so that the fragments cling to the string. Then they have kite fights. Two boys fly their kites together. Each one tries to get his to go in such a way that he can cut the other boy's string with the glass on his own string. It is quite exciting when a string is cut and a big kite comes toppling down to the ground. In many of the games the boys who are beaten have their faces marked with ink, while the girls have to put pieces of paper in their hair.

On festival days one of the most interesting sights is the "bug man," who has tame beetles which pull little carts full of rice. Other men have irregular wads of paper. When these are put into water, they unfold into pretty little flowers and birds or into animals and men. Still others have small wooden ducks and geese. When these are put into water, they swim around as if alive. Camphor has been stuck to them on one side, and when this dissolves it makes the little animals move.

Japan and Her People. Altogether Japan is a delightful country. Nature is everywhere charming, whether one looks at the blue bays studded with islands or the green mountains clothed with luxuriant trees far up toward the snowy top of Fuji and the other volcanoes.

In some parts of the world the works of man are far from harmonious with nature, but Japan has few of the ugly



A typical Japanese garden. Artistic landscape gardening is characteristic of Japan

factory towns and smoking furnaces which disfigure so many parts of Europe and America. For the most part the Japanese towns and villages, with their heavy-roofed wooden houses, fit into the landscape perfectly. So, too, do the tastefully dressed people, with their gentle ways and determined spirit. Nothing in all Japan is more charming than the universal politeness, even in the midst of crowds and discomfort. The Japanese are such polite people that now, as we say good-by to them, we may well imitate their custom, and bow low three times to the so-called "Yankees of the East."

CHAPTER XIX

CHINA: THE OLDEST OF NATIONS

The Civilization of China. Two thousand years ago the people of northern and central Europe were barbarians who spent most of their time in hunting and fighting. They dressed in skins and lived largely on the flesh of wild animals. To-day their descendants, the English, French, Germans, and other races of western Europe, are the most civilized nations in the world. When our ancestors were ignorant savages living in rude huts, the Chinese were already highly civilized. They lived in well-built houses, wore silk clothes, and knew how to read and write. They possessed schools, orphanages, and hospitals, and were governed peacefully and justly. Long before our ancestors thought of such things, the Chinese had devised the art of printing and invented gunpowder and the compass. They learned that the best way to settle quarrels was by arbitration rather than by blows.

After doing all this, the Chinese ceased to make progress, and have stood still for centuries. Europe and America, on the contrary, have progressed rapidly, leaving the Asiatics far behind. To-day, however, the Chinese are beginning to wake up. In a few hundred years they may once more be far ahead of us, unless we learn to practice greater industry, patience, and economy, the three great virtues of China.

The Isolation of China. Most boys and girls know how hard it is to study without a teacher, for instance during the summer vacation. If two or three children study together it is much easier than for one alone; yet even so it is difficult to make much progress unless there

is some one from whom to ask questions. For ages China has been like a pupil working alone and without a teacher.

The nations of modern Europe had Greece and Rome as teachers in some things and the Israelites and other races as teachers in other matters. And besides this they taught one another. When the French mastered some new fact, the English and Germans soon learned it from them. At other times the French were the learners, and so the countries of Europe made progress all together.

For thousands of years China has been separated from other nations, or else has been so much in advance of those around her that she could learn little from them. Long, long ago her people became so highly civilized that all the nations round them were barbarians in comparison. Little by little, China taught Japan, Chosen, Siam, and some of the islands of the sea. These countries adopted the Chinese mode of writing, the Chinese form of ancestor worship, and many other Chinese customs and arts. In some things Japan went far ahead of China; but the Chinese, foolishly, looked down upon their former pupils and would not learn from them. Then the Japanese shut themselves up in their islands for centuries and almost never went to China.

Former Chinese Ideas of Europe. When Europeans first visited China, the Chinese called them "barbarians" or "foreign devils." Books were printed in which Europeans were pictured as being like monkeys or apes, or as strange men having their heads on their breasts, ears a foot long, and only one eye apiece in the middle of the forehead. People in Europe had equally queer ideas of the Chinese, and there are old books in our libraries which say that they have hoofs like horses. At length, about a hundred years ago, the Chinese and Europeans

began to learn that they are much alike—even if the Chinese do have yellow skins while the Europeans, as the Chinese say, have red skins. At first the Chinese did not understand the strength and civilization of the rude barbarians who simply nodded their heads instead of bowing politely to the ground in Chinese fashion. When ambassadors first came from Europe, the Chinese tried to compel them to act as if the Chinese Emperor were their ruler, and to worship him by falling on their knees and knocking their heads on the floor nine times. High officials believed that England was a single city, and that America and Europe were little provinces which had once paid tribute to China. Now all this is changed. China and the remainder of the world have learned to know one another. The steamboat is the chief agent of the change.

Causes of the Isolation of China: Desert Barriers on the Northwest. In the old days China was shut off from the rest of the world. On the west and north lay the deserts of Chinese Turkistan and Mongolia and the almost uninhabitable region of eastern Siberia. Europeans almost never crossed the deserts, the only inhabitants of which were Tartar and Mongol nomads. Often the nomads suffered from lack of food for their cattle and themselves. Then they invaded China in hordes, and sometimes they conquered the country and ruled it for centuries. The present Emperor is a Manchu, whose ancestors invaded China in just this way more than two hundred fifty years ago. The Chinese did not learn much from the nomads, for the invaders were uncivilized and began at once to copy the Chinese.

The Great Wall. Two thousand years ago a Chinese emperor wanted to stop the invasions of barbarians, so he built a great wall, which still stands. The traveler

who goes to Peking can easily go out by rail to Shan-haikuan, two hundred miles to the northeast, and see it.



The Great Wall of China

It consists of two thick walls of gray bricks made of clay. Between the walls stone and earth have been packed until the whole is one solid mass. The entire structure is twenty-five feet wide, or somewhat wider than an ordinary house; and its height is thirty feet, which equals that of a two-story house with an attic. On top of the wall large towers rise thirty or forty feet higher. From the sea, east of Peking, this huge wall extends far away to the west to the great desert of the Tarim Basin. Its length, including the many windings, is about 1,700 miles. In America such a wall would extend almost from Buffalo to Santa Fe. The Romans, when they ruled England, built a similar but far smaller wall as protection against the warlike Picts of Scotland.

Mountainous Barriers on the West and South. On the southwest side of China nature itself has made a wall. South of Chinese Turkistan the great Tibetan Plateau can be crossed only with the greatest difficulty.

Farther to the south, in Burma and Siam, great mountain ranges and fever-laden valleys almost prevent all access to China from India. Native travelers are desperately afraid to spend the night in the deep gorges of the Salwin and Mekong rivers. The roads which they must traverse are extremely bad; and when they reach the hot, steamy valley bottoms, those who have come from the cool air of the high mountains on either side often contract fever and die.

The Sea as a Barrier on the East. On the eastern side China is bordered by the sea. Until the invention of steamships the broad ocean kept foreigners from the Western World away. Thus the Middle Kingdom, as the Chinese proudly call their country, was for thousands of years cut off from all the world except a few small nations who were her pupils. Few people went out of China, and few came in. The number of inhabitants kept growing, but no new ideas arose. Thus the largest and oldest of civilized nations stood still, keeping its own peculiar customs and becoming in consequence more and more unlike the rest of the world.

The Physical Form of China. On a physical map of China the Khingan Escarpment is seen to continue south-southwestward from Manchuria, past Peking, to Hwaiking-fu on the Hwang-ho, the great river of northern China. From there the escarpment continues irregularly as the edge of the high mountains of Inner Asia. Proceeding in the same southwesterly direction, it crosses the Yangtse River at the gorge above Ichang. Thence it passes through the remote province of Kweichow to the southwestern corner of the plateau province of Yünnan, in east longitude 106°, not far from the Tropic of Cancer. With the exception of the valley of the Hwang-ho, from the escarpment westward to

Singan-fu, and of the Red Basin of Sŭchwan on the upper Yangtse, the densely populated portion of China



The entrance to village in north China

lies to the east of the Khingan Escarpment and its nameless continuation. This area occupies about the same position in the continent of Asia that the portion of the United States east of the St. Lawrence, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers occupies in the continent of America. These two corresponding regions are of about the same size, and lie in about the same latitude, so that they enjoy essentially the same temperature. The Chinese region, however, is far more densely populated. The reason for this is found partly in the form of the land and partly in the climate.

The part of China east of the escarpment is divided naturally into four regions. The two northern are the great alluvial plains of the Hwang-ho and Yangtsekiang. For hundreds of miles, from beyond Peking in the north to south of Shanghai in the south, the plains are almost unbroken. Everywhere the soil is highly fertile. Hence, it is possible for a great number of people

to be supported by farming. The third region comprises the mountainous country four or five hundred miles wide which lies south of the Yangtse-kiang. Fortunately for the Chinese the mountains are comparatively old. Accordingly, they have been worn down to a rather low height and are well covered with soil. It is fortunate also that they lie south of latitude 30° . If they were located farther north, or if they were higher, the climate would render agriculture relatively difficult, and the population could not be dense. As it is, most parts of the mountains can be cultivated.

On the steeper slopes terraces are constructed, and it is almost as easy to raise crops among the mountains as on the plains. Accordingly, this region is much more densely peopled than is any other extensive mountainous country in the world. The fourth and most southern division of China consists of the basin of the Si-kiang. It is partly mountainous and partly plain, but everywhere the region is capable of supporting great numbers of people.

The Climate of China. The climate of China, even more than the isolation of the country and the form of



A village among the mountains of south China

the land, has a tremendous effect upon the habits and character of the Chinese. If China, like the corresponding latitudes of Southwestern Asia, received its rainfall chiefly in winter, the population might not be more than a tenth as great as at present, and the mode of life of the people would be wholly different from what it now is. The great size of the continent of Asia, as we have seen in other cases, causes the land to fall to a very low temperature during the winter and to become greatly heated in summer. This occasions high barometric pressure in winter and low pressure in summer. Accordingly, in the cold season the prevailing winds of eastern Asia blow outward, not only in Manchuria, Chosen, and Japan, but also in China Proper. The winter winds are cold and dry, because they come from the interior. In northern China they sweep down as bitter gales from the northwest. In southern China they are not so cold, but they bring frosts to Hong-kong and make the winters comparatively bracing as far south as the Tropic of Cancer. This is an excellent thing for the Chinese, for it imparts energy to those who live in latitudes where the continuous heat is likely to induce inactivity and laziness.

In summer the winds blow inward from the south or southeast. Since the climatic belts of the earth follow the sun from south to north in the spring, the winds from the ocean reach southern China earlier than northern China. In the south they begin as early as April. As the warm, damp, in-blowing winds rise over the mountains of southern China, they expand and grow cool so rapidly that they give up large amounts of rain. Hence, luxuriant vegetation and dense population prevail not only in the plains of the Si-kiang, but among the mountains of the southern half of China. Farther

north the rain comes later, and in northern China it does not arrive until June. As a rule, however, it comes in time to enable rich crops to grow in all the plains, although here the mountains are not so productive. In the regions where the rain is delayed till June forests are scarce. Trees require a long growing season. In the spring neither they nor any other plants can begin to grow until the refreshing rains arrive. After the coming of the rain the season is too short for the trees to make their proper growth. Therefore, forests are confined to the moister places, and the mountains as a whole are naked and barren, quite unlike the beautifully-forested and densely-peopled mountains of the south.

The Density of Population in China. In the preceding paragraphs we have spoken of the great density of the population of China. This is evidently due to the three factors which have just been discussed; namely, the isolation of China, the form of the land, and the climate. The isolation of the country has made it difficult for the inhabitants to migrate to other lands, as the people of Europe have been doing for the past three hundred years, since America and Australia began to be settled. Hence, they have stayed at home and increased in number. Moreover, because of the barriers on all sides China has not suffered so severely from devastating wars as have some other countries whose populations have thereby been diminished at frequent intervals. The effect of the form of the land upon the density of population in China is evident. The plains of the north are so fertile and easily tilled that they naturally support millions of people. The mountains are chiefly in the south where the temperature is such that their elevation does not cause them to be unfruitful. If the plains were in the south and the mountains in the north,

the number of inhabitants could not be so great as now. The plains would be warm, swampy, and unhealthful to a much greater extent than at present, and the mountains would be too cold to produce abundant crops, even though their slopes are gentle and the soil deep. Finally the third and most important factor in promoting density of population in China is the summer rains caused by in-blowing monsoon winds. Sometimes the winds fail and the rains are scanty. Then, as we shall see, great numbers of people die from famine, and the population is reduced.

The density of the Chinese population has had many different results. For instance, the scarcity of land has led fathers to divide their fields among their sons time and again, in successive generations. Hence, to-day the fields are remarkably small and irregular in shape. Often a farm consists of only four or five acres divided into little patches not much bigger than city house lots and scattered in various places. The necessity for land is so great that the roads, especially in the plains, consist of merely the narrowest paths, just wide enough for a man or a wheelbarrow. Often the paths are extremely crooked, because the owners of fields keep encroaching upon them in the attempt to get a little more land. It is said that when a dishonest man and a careless neighbor live side by side, the former often moves the boundary stones of his field steadily over into his neighbor's field, a foot this year, a foot next, and so on, until he has stolen fifteen or twenty feet of good land without being noticed.

Another result of the density of the population of China is the unparalleled industry of the Chinese. No other nation in the world works so hard. Men, women, and children work most of the time. People who have

so little land in proportion to the number of inhabitants must of sheer necessity work hard or else starve. Moreover they must be very economical, a trait which the Chinese possess to a high degree. It is often said that a Chinese family could live on what an ordinary American family throws away. This is an exaggeration, but, nevertheless, the Chinese have learned to save everything.



Industrious Chinese coolies carrying coal

Except among those who are comparatively wealthy, they do not throw old pieces of cloth into the rag bag, as we do. On the contrary they save them, and patch their clothes until it is hard to tell which are the patches and which the clothes. Food is never thrown away in our reckless fashion, and everything that can possibly be eaten is always saved. Many things which we do not consider edible are esteemed by the Chinese. For instance they use fishskin and several kinds of seaweed, and poor people eat the flesh of certain animals such as dogs. All this is due entirely to the fact that the inhabitants are so numerous that every possible source of food must be utilized.

The Poverty of China. From what has just been said, it is evident that the Chinese are a poor nation. Their poverty is largely the result of the density of population. Little by little during the thousands of years of their existence the Chinese have learned how to

live in such a way that the largest number of people are supported on the smallest possible amount of land. They have come to rely for food upon crops which yield the greatest return per acre. Accordingly, the people do not eat much meat and wheat. Except in the far northwest where the country is relatively dry and not densely inhabited, wheat fields and flocks or herds are as scarce as in Japan, and for the same reasons. In the north and in some parts of the south millet takes the place of wheat, but the commonest food is rice. Meat is replaced, as one would expect, by beans and peas and other pulses. Such a diet is good in times of plenty, but bad when famines come, as they so often do in China.

In countries where the people eat wheat and meat and feed their animals with grain, there is much less distress from scanty crops than in China. If necessary, the inhabitants of such lands can kill the animals, and not only eat their flesh, but use for food the grain that would have been fed to the live stock. In China when the crops fail, there is absolutely nothing to fall back upon, and the people starve. This fact has had much to do with making the Chinese unprogressive. They have been discouraged time after time by recurring famine or disaster and have not been able to overcome such a handicap. For the same reason the Chinese are likely to be slow in taking a prominent place in the world's affairs. On the whole they are too poor and unprogressive to rise into sudden prominence like their neighbors, the Japanese. It must be remembered, however, that the economy and industry of the Chinese are characteristics which may sometime make them one of the most powerful nations of the world. At present these qualities have not yet played an important part

because the Chinese are so slow to adopt new methods. Many of the leaders, however, are progressive.

The Diversity and Unity of China. There is great diversity in China. The dry mountains of the north present a totally different appearance from the bamboo-covered slopes of the far south, and the rich plains and rice fields of the mouth of the Yangtse contrast strongly with the almost impassable and uninhabitable valleys on the borders of the plateau of Yunnan. The people, too, differ greatly in the various parts. Their customs, language, and dress all differ. In some places, such as the almost inaccessible mountains of the province of Kweichow in the southwest, the mountains are inhabited by aboriginal races wholly different from the Chinese.

Nevertheless, China as a whole possesses remarkable similarity in all parts. It is diverse but by no means so diverse as India, for example. Everywhere except among the aborigines the same form of Buddhism, modified by the teachings of Confucius, prevails. The whole country looks to Peking as its head, and the language of Peking is used everywhere by officials and men of education. In spite of the differences between the various parts, China is not sharply divided into distinct physical provinces. One region shades off into another; there are almost no large uninhabited areas; and there is no part of the country where it is impossible to travel. Because of this it has been possible to send out officials year after year from Peking to all of the outlying provinces. They have taken with them the ideas of the capital and have spread them through the country. In the same way, merchants have always been in the habit of traveling to all sections. If it had been necessary to cross extensive uninhabited areas or to go to places where there was a sudden change from

one type of country to another, this would not have been so easy. Everywhere, however, the merchants found people from whom to buy food and to whom to sell goods. They could always find some one who knew the language of Peking, and hence it was comparatively easy to visit even the remote parts of the country. Thus the various portions of China have never become diverse and unrelated, as have those of India.

CHAPTER XX

PEKING AND THE HWANG-HO

The Diversity of China. In the last chapter we considered the general facts in regard to China as a whole, its isolation, the form of the land, and the climate. We saw that China has stagnated because she has been cut off from the rest of the world. She has grown poor because favorable physical conditions have made the population very dense, while other conditions have prevented people from moving away. We saw, too, that physical conditions have permitted the country to have a large amount of diversity and yet to remain one land inhabited by a single nation. In this chapter and others we shall take up the various parts of China. We shall see how they differ, and shall study some of the many customs which depend more or less closely on the general facts already stated.

The Mouth of the Yellow River. An excellent way to get a good idea of China as a whole is to begin in the far northeast near Peking and travel southward along the coast, turning aside to follow each of the three great rivers far into the interior. In approaching the coast of north China through the Gulf of Pechili, one notices that the water changes from blue to muddy yellow. No land is in sight, but the captain of the steamer says that the ship is passing the mouth of the Hwang-ho, or Yellow River, which brings down enormous quantities of mud from the plateaus far to the west. Part of the mud is deposited on the land, and part is spread over the bottom of the sea. In this way the sea becomes more and more shallow and its borders are gradually

converted into land. After a ship has sailed many miles through the Yellow Sea, land at length appears, a flat, uninteresting country, so low that it cannot be seen till close at hand.

Peking. A short railroad ride across the smooth plain takes one to Peking, the famous capital. The city consists of two large oblongs inclosed by walls, which are higher and thicker than the Great Wall. Every Chinese city has walls, and so do many of the villages. The walls are of little use as a protection against modern cannon, but in the old days they furnished excellent protection; and even now they are useful in keeping out the bands of robbers who often infest the country in times of famine. The southern oblong of Peking is called the Chinese city. The northern is the Tartar or Manchu city, where all the government offices are located. In the center of the city, within another inclosure, the Emperor formerly lived with his family and crowds of attendants. In the old days the Chinese worshipped the Emperor. When he passed through the streets, at rare intervals, everyone was obliged to leave the route where he was to pass, and all shops were closed. Since 1912 all this is changed. China is now a republic with a parliament and president. Most of the Chinese, however, know little about the government. A few officials rule all the rest of the inhabitants.

Street Scenes and Clothing in Peking. Peking is a dirty city. The narrow streets are full of holes; for there are almost no pavements, and in the wet weather of summer they are fearfully muddy. The houses are almost all low, with tiled roofs. The stores and shops are small, but many of them appear elegant from a distance. This is because the fronts are made of carved wood and ornamented with gaudy signs bearing Chinese

letters painted on a background of red, black, gold, or silver. Thousands of people pass to and fro, talking in



Chinese military officers with fans and smoked glasses

a tone which to us sounds very singsong. The people from the country are dressed mostly in blue. Those from the city wear brighter clothes; some of the women have dresses of purple and green, of blue and pink, and of other gay colors. The most interesting clothes are the silk robes of officials. Some wear light blue gowns, and others dark blue or purple. On their breasts the military officers wear large square pieces of silk upon which are embroidered tigers, while the civil officials wear peaceful birds done in the most beautiful colors. It seems strange to us to see men dressed in skirts and carrying fans, but to the Chinese this is the proper thing. Many of the officials and merchants wear large glasses, an inch and a half in diameter, and nearly a quarter of an inch thick. Sometimes these are smoked to protect the eyes from the glare of the sun, and the

appearance is so odd that the foreigner can hardly refrain from laughing.

Officials and other people of importance do not go about much on foot. Army officers ride on horses, but to most Chinese this seems too warlike. Because of the large amount of food which they require, horses are very scarce in the densely-populated parts of China. Hence the Chinese are afraid of them and think that it requires a brave man to ride one. Most Chinese who are not so poor as to travel on foot employ uncomfortable little carts with two wheels and no springs, such as we saw in Manchuria. Those who can afford to do so ride in sedan chairs, which may be described as bird houses large enough for a man. The sedans are mounted on long poles. Two, four, or eight men put the poles on their shoulders and trot away with the sedan. Only persons of high rank are allowed to have eight sedan bearers. In China it is possible to tell the rank of many people by their hats, or rather by the round buttons worn on the tops of their hats. The highest officials or mandarins wear red buttons, the next wear blue, the next white, and the lowest gold or gilt. Scholars also wear a special button on their hats.

The Languages of China: Methods of Writing. Sometimes in the busy streets of Peking one notices two men in a shop who seem to be doing business but do not talk to each other. They write down what they have to say on a piece of paper which they pass back and forth. At first it seems that they must be deaf or dumb, but soon both turn aside and begin to talk freely to their companions. They write, simply because one is from a distant province where the spoken language is quite different from that of Peking. The Chinese language furnishes an admirable illustration of both the diversity

and the unity of the country. China is so large and its people are so separated from one another that there are many branches of the Chinese language which differ as much as do French and Italian. For instance, in Peking the word for "man" is *jin*; in Shantung it is *yin*; in Shanghai, *nieng*; at Ningpo, *ning*; at Foochow, *long*; and at Canton, *yan*. Yet the country possesses such a degree of unity that, strange as it may seem to us, all these words are written in exactly the same way.

The Chinese do not have any letters representing sounds as we do. Instead, they have what are called ideographs. These originated as pictures which have now been reduced to a very few lines. Thus, for "man" the Chinese write 人, which represents the body and two legs of a man. Any man who can read understands that 人 means "man;" but if he is from Peking he pronounces it *jin*, while if he is from Foochow he calls it *long*. It is just like our numerals. If we see the figure "2" we call it *two*; but a Frenchman calls it *deux*, and a German *zwei*. When the sign for "man" is put into four lines representing walls, thus 囚, it means "prisoner." A dash in the middle of an oblong 日 means "sun;" and a pig under a roof 家 means "home." Chinese is written in columns, not in lines. The first page is at what we call the back of a book and footnotes are put at the top.

The Chinese language is very hard to learn. In the standard Chinese dictionary there are 44,449 characters, all different. It is not necessary to learn all these, but about 2,500 are necessary. Many of them are very complicated, much worse than the one given above for "home." It would not be possible to learn them if the simpler signs—such as those for "man" and "sun"—were not repeated again and again in new combinations. Even so, it takes most of a boy's school days to learn to

write. The letters are not made with a pen but with a soft brush. One day a Chinese watched a traveler write with a fountain pen. He thought that the foreigner must be a magician because he never dipped the pen into ink. "Can the pen make ink of itself?" he asked. When the working of the pen was explained to him, he understood it at once, for the Chinese are clever people. After watching the traveler write a few minutes more, he remarked to another onlooker, "What a learned man the stranger must be to write such small letters." The Chinese language is so difficult to write that only those who have written a great deal can make small, neat letters with the common brush. The Chinese believe that if a man writes much he must be learned, and they have a great admiration for learning. They have taught their system of writing to the Japanese and Koreans. Educated men in all three countries read the same books and can understand one another's letters, even in cases where they cannot understand a word of any spoken language but their own.

Europeans and Americans find it almost impossible to use the Chinese language. Accordingly, in foreign business a language is used which has English words altered in such a way as to be easy for the Chinese to pronounce. It is called "pidgin," or "business" English. Here is a sample. An American in one of the "treaty ports," or Chinese cities where foreigners are allowed to live and own land, went to call on two young ladies. The Chinese servant, who opened the door, gravely remarked: "That two piecey girl no can see. Number one piecey top side, makee washee, washee. Number two piecey go outside, makee walkee, walkee." He meant that the elder sister was up stairs taking a bath, and the younger had gone out to walk.

Traveling by Wheelbarrow. From Peking one can travel southward by rail or can go back to the sea; but if one wants to see as much as possible of the people, it is a very good plan to go by wheelbarrow. Of course it is not very comfortable, and unless one carries food with him he may be able to get nothing but rice and tea, or



Rapid transit in China. Seeing the country on a wheelbarrow

poor cakes made of millet. A Chinese wheelbarrow has a much larger wheel than ours, and the load is put on either side of it. One man holds up the handles, on which there is very little weight, and often another pulls in front. Sometimes a donkey is fastened on ahead. If there is a good wind from behind, a sail is put up, and away trundles the wheelbarrow so fast that the barrow man almost has to trot. This odd one-wheeled vehicle is used partly because of the scarcity of horses, and partly because its single wheel renders it fit for the narrow roads of China. Both reasons for its use result from the density of the population.

The Plains of Pechili. In the vast, smooth plain south of Peking there are no real roads, only the crooked paths already described, dusty in winter and very muddy in summer. There are no fences, nor any pasture lands. Every foot of ground right up to the

winding paths is cultivated. Village succeeds village so quickly that it seems as if one were in the suburbs of a city most of the time. Often the traveler meets other wheelbarrows, or men carrying loads on their backs, and occasionally a sedan chair is met. Of course, animals such as cows, horses, and sheep are very rare, because there is no room for them. Pigs and chickens, however, are abundant; for these animals require but little room and can be fed on food that man cannot use.

The Cue. Most of the men on the road wear their hair in cues, or "pigtails." Some have it loosely braided, which shows that they have the same disagreeable traits of character as those men in America who always wear their hats on one side of their heads. Others, who are at work, have the cue coiled around the neck; but when they meet an acquaintance they at once take it down. To have one's cue around the neck or in a knot when greeting a friend, is like a man having his hat on in the house in America. When the Manchus came to China, nearly three hundred years ago, they wore cues; but the Chinese did not. The new Emperor ordered the men to wear cues as a sign that they were conquered. They would not do it, but kept their hair cut short. Then he ordered that all criminals should have their hair cut short. At once everyone began to let his hair grow as a sign that he was not a criminal. Then for centuries all Chinese were very proud of the cue, but since the revolution many people have given it up.

Foot-binding. With the exception of the very poor many of the women whom the traveler meets have a strange, tottering way of walking. They have to sit down and rest very often. It is because they have small feet. When they are babies their feet were tied up very tightly, and kept so until the babies became women.

The feet have no chance to grow, and are often only two and a half or three inches long. The Chinese used to think that small feet were beautiful, but the custom is a very silly one. It causes much suffering to the girls, who never can run and play and have any fun. Almost every nation has some foolish customs of this kind, which have grown up no one knows how. Fortunately the Chinese have begun to see the folly of foot-binding, and it is being given up.

Scenes outside a Village. When the barrow man meets a friend, he does not merely say, "How do you do?" and pass on. Instead he stops to make many low bows, and says politely, "Has your honorable and worthy self eaten rice?" Each of the friends pretends to bow lower or more often than the other, and each seems to prevent the other from bowing. But it is half sham, for they both know that the one whose station is considered lowest will make the most and the humblest bows. The process takes a long time and, as it is near nightfall, the traveler is glad to go on to the next town, which is merely a big village with a wall. Outside the wall not a house can be seen, although other villages, walled and unwalled, appear in all directions across the plain. Between them the land is a great garden with patches of melons, turnips, and huge cabbages, fields of millet, wheat, and other crops. Here and there is seen a vineyard or a few trees. In almost every field there is a little sleeping shed or a platform raised above the ground. In the harvest season some one must watch the fields all the time to see that nothing is stolen. Hence scores of people are seen coming out of the village with pieces of cloth and the crudest kind of cots on which to sleep. China is so thickly populated that in every village there are poor people who steal in order to live. Some of

the people belong to the village; more of them have come from some place where there has been a famine.



A typical Chinese village

Scenes inside a Village. Inside the wall of the village the houses are huddled together as closely as in the city. Most of them are made of dry mud; for, as we have seen, wood is scarce in northern China, because the monsoon rains do not come till the very end of spring or the beginning of summer. The roofs of some houses are flat and are made of mud, while those of others slope and are covered with a thatch of straw. Only the best have roofs of good red tiles. During the heavy rains of summer a mud house often becomes so wet that it crumbles to pieces and falls down, occasionally killing some of the occupants.

Chinese Superstitions. In the villages the streets are never straight for any great distance. "Why is this?" a traveler asked. "Oh," said his barrow man, "you know there are many demons living around here. Sometimes they come into the village and do lots of harm. They make people grow sick, or lose their money. We try to keep them out as much as possible, and our priests

say many prayers against them at the temples. Still they often get in. You know they are very stupid. When they get started they keep on straight ahead and can't turn a corner. We always make the streets in our villages crooked just to fool them. They don't know when they come to a corner, and so they run into the walls and get hurt.

"Last summer," the barrow man went on, smoothing his pigtail, "the demons were very bad. We planted our seeds in the fields as usual in the spring. A few showers fell and some of the crops came up. Then the demons stopped the summer rains from falling. They made the northwest wind blow. It dried up the earth. The plants which had begun to grow all shrivelled up. The plain was bare and brown in June, and one would have thought it was midwinter, if the air had not been so hot. We made a procession and prayed for rain. Every man carried a green willow branch, for the willows had not dried up. Then we got an image of the Dragon King, who causes drought. One man went ahead with a bucket of water into which he dipped his branch, and sprinkled the dripping water on the ground, crying out, 'The rain comes, the rain comes.' Other men carried gongs and drums, and still others, flags. Yellow and white flags stood for wind and water; green and black ones represented clouds. On them were inscriptions such as, 'Prayer is offered for rain,' or 'For the salvation and relief of the people.' As we walked along everyone cried out, 'The rain is coming,' or 'Let it rain.'

"The priests led us to the river. There we caught the Dragon King. He took the form of a little green lizard, in order that we might not know him. But we put him in a sedan chair and carried him to the house of

the Mandarin. The great man came out and worshiped the Dragon King, and then we let the lizard go. We



A Chinese temple

thought the rain would come then, but it did not. The Mandarin went to all the temples to pray. Then he ordered the north gate to be shut. The dry winds come from the north, you know, and sometimes, if the north gates are shut, it keeps the demon of drought away. Even that was of no use, and at last we went to the temple of the Goddess of Mercy. We took her image and set it out in the sun until the paint peeled off, in order that she might see how we were suffering from the drought. In July the rain came, but it was so late that we only got a very small crop of millet and vegetables. Half the people in the village did not have enough to eat, and thirty people died of hunger."

Drought and Famine. Every village has stories like this to tell. Almost all parts of China suffer from drought, especially the northern parts. The monsoon winds bringing rain from the ocean in summer are a great blessing; but when they come late or when they bring less rain than the crops need, the people

suffer terribly. As the Chinese have not studied the laws of nature, they do not understand why the rains fail. They think that all misfortunes are due to evil spirits or demons. A large part of their time and energy is spent in trying to prevent the demons from doing harm. At last the leaders of China are beginning to see that by studying the causes of misfortune they may be able to find remedies.

A River above a City. After the traveler had heard about the drought and the famines, he went on for many days southward across the same smooth plain, and at last came near the city of Kaifung. In the distance a high wall appeared, stretching for miles in either direction. It was too long to be merely the wall of a city. "What can it be?" he asked himself. Steps led up the side of it, and up these he climbed, followed by the barrow man. At the top he found himself on the banks of a broad, muddy stream, the great Hwang-ho. He was ferried across in a boat, and on the other bank saw below him on the plain the great city of Kaifung. There it lay, its gray walls surrounding a blue-gray sea of common houses, from which arose here and there the red blocks of large government buildings, the green-tiled



*The twin pagodas southwest of Peking,
near Taiyuen-fu in Shansi*

roofs of tawdry temples, and the slender shafts of tall pagodas. There were, also, massive walls of stone-faced pawnshops and of storehouses six or seven stories high. If the river, now at its height, should rise a little farther and overflow the banks or make a break in them, much of the city would be flooded.

The Floods of the Hwang-ho. Every year the turbid river deposits mud in its bed at low water. The next year at high water the stream rises a little higher than before, and the great embankments which wall it in have to be built up a little more. In this way the bed of the river and its banks rise gradually above the plain. Sometimes the river breaks through its banks and floods the country for dozens of miles on either side. Formerly the Hwang-ho did not turn to the northeast near Kaifung-fu, but went on straight east and then a little south, and entered the ocean not far north of the mouth of the Yangtse-kiang.

In 1852, however, the river broke through its banks and streamed away northward along its present course to its mouth in the Gulf of Pechili, more than three hundred miles from the old mouth. Thousands of square miles of the plain were flooded. A raging torrent of yellow water swept away hundreds of villages and millions of people had to flee. Many could not escape and were drowned. The others saved their lives but lost everything else—houses, furniture, crops, friends. Families were separated; children wandered about for weeks trying in vain to find their parents. It was months before the homeless sufferers found rest. Many died of starvation; more were killed by the pestilence that followed. The remainder settled in new places or became beggars or, after the floods had subsided, wandered back to the place which had once been home.

In 1887 the Hwang-ho again changed its course. This time it broke away to the south at Kaifung-fu and flowed to the Yangtse-kiang. Again hundreds of thousands of people perished of starvation or were drowned. It cost the Chinese government twelve or thirteen million dollars to get the river back to its old bed. No wonder the Hwang-ho is called "China's Sorrow." The changes in its course were as great as would be those of the Mississippi if it should suddenly leave its present channel at the mouth of the Arkansas River, and should flow to the Gulf of Mexico by way of Montgomery and Tallahassee, through the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

For hundreds of thousands of years before men existed in China, the Hwang-ho and the other rivers flowed to the seas as they chose, sometimes in one channel and sometimes in another. Thus they deposited the mud which they carried and built up the great plains where a large part of the multitudes of Chinese now live. To-day the plains are the most productive part of the country. They have a population more dense than that of any other part of the world except, perhaps, the plains of the Ganges and the Nile. In no other place do floods have such an opportunity to cause disaster and famine. The reason for the floods is, in part, the great amount of rain which the monsoons cause to fall in midsummer and, in part, the lack of forests on the mountains to hold back the water.

The Northwestern Plateau Provinces: Coal. Above Kaifung-fu, the plain of the Hwang-ho soon comes to an end. The river here flows across the escarpment which in China, as in Manchuria, divides the low plains from the plateaus. On the plateau lie the provinces of Shansi, Shensi, and Kansu. They are rich in coal and iron, but

are too dry and hilly to be very thickly inhabited. Because of the minerals many foreigners want to build railroads and open mines; but the Chinese are slow about giving permission, because they prefer to do these things themselves. Some day the plateau provinces will play the same part in China that Pennsylvania does in the United States, or that Lancashire does in England.

Loess. In Shensi and Shansi many of the roads are trenches from ten to fifty feet deep. In this region horses and other animals, such as sheep, are more numerous than in the great plains, because here part of the land cannot possibly be cultivated, and so is used for pasture. As the traveler rides along in the bottom of a dusty ditch on horseback or in a Chinese cart, he notices doors cut in the walls of the road and people going in and out. The doors give access to small square caves or houses dug in the soft soil in which



A memorial temple in Shansi

the roads are sunk. These dwellings have no windows and no means of ventilation. In many cases there is no way for smoke to get out except through the door. The houses are warm and dry, but are not very pleasant according to our ideas. Above the houses, on the top of the plain, are roads and smooth fields where crops are growing, watered sometimes by streams and canals, which have to be carefully kept away from the deep roads.

All this region is composed of the peculiar kind of soil called loess. When the strong northwest winds blow from Mongolia and the desert region of Gobi, they whirl up the loose sand and dust of those dry regions and carry it forward with them. The larger particles are soon dropped, but the smaller are carried for hundreds of miles. The air is sometimes so full of dust that it is impossible to see more than half a mile. Little by little the dust falls, but fast enough to be noticeable in a few minutes on white cloth. Sometimes it comes down so fast that in writing a letter one must brush his paper every ten or fifteen minutes to keep the pen from becoming clogged. Where the dust falls in grassy places, it remains. In the course of thousands of years so much dust has fallen that now there is a deposit fifty to one hundred feet thick of fine, yellow earth, or loess. It is very tenacious, so that when it is cut with a spade the marks of the spade may remain visible ten or twenty years. Along the roads the feet of the animals and the wheels of carts break up the loess into dust. The wind picks up the dust and carries it away. Thus the roads keep losing material and sink into the ground.

Winter Customs of Heating Houses and of Dress. The plateau provinces are very cold in winter. The houses are heated by "kangs," or mud platforms of the sort that are found in Manchuria. As coal is not much used,

weeds are the chief fuel, but they blaze up quickly and are soon consumed. A "kang" may be very warm when one goes to bed on it, but after a few hours it becomes very cold. It is so hard to keep warm that the people here, as in all parts of northern China, wear a great many clothes. Often they put on one dress after another, until in cold weather they may have on five or six and look enormously fat. Sometimes a child has on so many clothes that when it falls down it cannot get up again; and there it lies kicking until its mother notices it.

CHAPTER XXI

SHANTUNG AND THE PROVINCES OF THE YANGTSE-KIANG

Shantung. Between the old and new mouths of the Hwang-ho lies the promontory of Shantung. Long ago, when the great plains of China were under the sea, it was an island. Now it is only partly surrounded by the ocean, and the western side is bordered by plains smoother than our prairies. Shantung is a mountainous, rocky region. Its hills are bare and not very fruitful; but its people are among the strongest and most capable in all China. Because they are poor, many of them go elsewhere to find new homes. Most of the millions who have recently settled in Manchuria are from Shantung. For thousands of years the rocky peninsula has been one of the most important parts of the Middle Kingdom. More than two thousand years ago it was the home of Confucius and Mencius, the two greatest men of China. The descendants of Confucius — the Dukes of Kung — still live here, where their ancestors have lived for seventy-six generations. No other family in the world can trace its ancestors back so far.

Foreign Nations and Chinese Law. In modern times Shantung has been a region much desired by the nations of Europe. Germany compelled China to lease to her the city and harbor of Kiao-chou on the south coast a few years ago, and England demanded and obtained a lease of the fine harbor of Weihaiwei on the north coast. Now the Germans are building railroads and opening mines. Little by little they are taking the control of Shantung out of the hands of the Chinese.

The Chinese form of government is so different from that of Europe and America that foreigners are not willing to live under Chinese laws. In Italy an American is subject to the laws of that country, and if he commits a crime or has a lawsuit, he must come before an Italian court. In China it is different. All foreigners are tried according to their own laws, by consuls and other officials of their own government. This vexes the Chinese; but foreign governments will not consent to any other arrangement until the Chinese change their laws and their courts.

Chinese Punishments. In Shantung, and in every other province, prisoners are often whipped until they die. Those who are suspected of crime are tortured until they confess. Sometimes one sees by the wayside two or three criminals with pieces of wood, like the tops of kitchen tables, around their necks. The boards are kept on night and day until the punishment is ended. The men must go without food unless friends feed them, for their hands cannot reach their mouths through the boards. Neither can the men lie down by night or by day, nor sit with their backs against anything, nor protect themselves against passers-by, who spit upon them and insult them. On the boards are pasted papers saying, "This man is a thief," "This man let his father go hungry when he himself had plenty," or "This man led a mob to pull down his neighbor's house."

One of the worst things about Chinese punishments is that they are not always inflicted on the right person. A rich Chinese was convicted of cheating his customers and of illtreating his mother. He sent this message to the judge: "I know a poor man who wants to get money to bury his father. He will come and take my whipping if I pay him enough. If you will let him take

my place, I will pay you a hundred ounces of silver." The judge sent back word: "Send the money secretly. Go to your home. I will have a new trial in which it will seem as if the poor man was the criminal, not you." Of course no civilized government can allow its subjects to be treated in this way.

"Treaty Ports."

The majority of the Chinese do not like to have foreigners in their country, especially when the foreigners grow rich by doing business which the Chinese think they themselves might do. On the other hand, foreigners do not like to live in China except under the protection of their own governments. Accordingly, it has been agreed that foreigners shall not do business or settle permanently in all parts of the country, but only in about thirty cities which have been especially agreed upon. In many of the "treaty ports," as the cities are called, a certain quarter is set apart for foreigners and is put under foreign rule. There any one may buy land and do business just as in America or Europe. Outside of the treaty ports missionaries are almost the only foreigners who reside permanently in Chinese cities.

Besides the treaty ports there are five cities in China which belong outright to foreign nations, or have been leased by them for long terms. Two of these, as we have



A prisoner wearing the heavy wooden frame. Note the placards telling the story of his offense

seen, are in Shantung, namely, Weihaiwei, belonging to England, and Kiao-chou, belonging to Germany. North



A coolie with his wheelbarrow loaded with rice in front of a shop at Shanghai

of Shantung, Japan has taken possession of Port Arthur and the country around it. In the south, at the mouth of the Si-kiang, England long ago compelled China to give her the famous port of Hong-kong, now one of the greatest commercial centers in the

world. Not far away lies Macao, which Portugal took against the will of China. It was once important, but now its trade has gone to Hong-kong, and Macao is merely a great gambling resort. The history of the foreign cities and treaty ports illustrates the way in which European nations have compelled China to trade with them. The Chinese wanted to be let alone, but the other nations thought that they could grow rich by trading with China. As they had guns and ships, they were able to compel the Chinese to do as they wished. The people of China resent this, and no one can blame them.

Shanghai. The most important of all the treaty ports is Shanghai. It lies near the mouth of the Yangtse-kiang and bears the same relation to China that New

York does to the United States. Its harbor is not so good as that of New York, because the river is constantly bringing down mud and filling it up. Shanghai, like most Chinese ports, does not lie directly on the sea, but fifty-four miles inland on a branch of the Yangtse-kiang. Its situation closely resembles that of New Orleans. Most great rivers form deltas at their mouths. At the seaward margin of such deltas, sand bars and shoals usually abound, and the land is so low that it is better to put the cities inland a little. Even if a town is founded directly upon the coast, so much sediment is likely to be deposited in the sea that in a few hundreds of years the town is separated from the water by a tract of flat new land. Therefore Shanghai, New Orleans, Calcutta, Hamburg, and many other important cities are not located directly at the mouths of their rivers, but a short distance upstream on the delta, beside one of the main branches, or distributaries, of the stream.

Chinese Guilds. Shanghai is a good deal warmer than Peking and north China, but the habits of its people are very similar to those of other parts of the country. Its narrow, ill-smelling streets are full of shops. In one street all of the shoemakers are gathered together, and one can watch them making shoes out of cord. They use this material because leather is too expensive by reason of the scarcity



Chinese carpenters at work

of animals. In another place the coppersmiths fill the air with the din of hammering. Silk merchants occupy another section, and dealers in spices another. Each trade has its guild or union, and is responsible for the care of the streets and the orderliness of its own section.

Beggars. One day an American was walking on the city wall at evening, when he came upon a company of well-dressed men drinking tea. They invited him to drink with them, although he was a stranger. They did not expect him to do it, but Chinese politeness obliges people to give many invitations which they do not expect to have accepted. The American accepted, however, and sat down. As he sipped his tea with a sucking noise to show that he enjoyed it, he asked, "What is your honorable profession?" "We are beggars," was the answer. They had taken off their rags and the bloody bandages which they wear and were enjoying money which they had begged.

In so poor a country as China beggars are naturally very numerous, especially after a drought or a flood. Begging is a recognized profession, and each large town has a beggars' guild or union. The head beggar makes an agreement with the other beggars that they are each to go to such and such places. They must not go to any merchant oftener than once in so many days. They must not go to houses. If a shopkeeper will not give a "cash" — a Chinese coin like a big cent with a square hole in the middle and worth a tenth of a cent, or even much less—the beggar waits a while, and then gets some friends; they go to the merchant's shop and make such a howling that no one will come to buy. At last the merchant has to give to all the beggars instead of only to one. If the headman of the beggars learns that some one is going to give a feast to celebrate

a wedding or a funeral, he sends around to get a share of the good things. If the share is not given, the beggars make such a commotion that the wedding or the funeral cannot go on.

Chinese Funerals. It seems strange to talk of a feast at a funeral, but that is what one finds in China. Feasts are almost the only good times that the Chinese enjoy. When a person is sick, no one thinks of leaving him alone. His friends gather in the room and talk and laugh and make a noise which would be almost enough to kill one of us. If the sick man already has a coffin, he feels happy, for he knows that he will have a good funeral. When the funeral finally takes place, there is a great procession with as many people as possible. All are dressed in white or wear white bands, instead of black, as with us. As the coffin is carried through the streets there is much tooting of horns and beating of drums. Members of the procession keep throwing paper money into the air in handfuls. This is for the demons, so that they may be willing to keep away and not trouble the spirit of the dead man. Large quantities of the paper are also burned. It is supposed that the dead man will need money and that he can use the burned paper. A funeral is extremely expensive. Often a family spends every bit of its money in order to have many lanterns, much paper money, and a fine feast at a funeral.

Chinese Weddings: Ancestor Worship. Sometimes a gay procession is seen in which are several sedan chairs loaded with fancy cakes, clothes, and many fine things. Behind these comes a bright-red sedan. A bride is in the red sedan, and she is on her way to her husband's house. Usually she is not happy. At home girls do not as a rule have a very good time. Confucius taught that a child should obey his parents in all things while

the parents are alive and should worship them when they die. In all parts of China every house has its shrine



*A Chinese bride in a gay sedan chair, on the way to
her husband's home*

containing tablets or images of the ancestors of a family. These are worshiped every few days with candles, incense, and offerings of food. It is considered a great misfortune if a family has no children to worship the ancestors. Now, when a girl is married she goes to the house of her husband's parents. She then becomes a part of their family and obeys them and worships the ancestors of her father-in-law. She is, as the Chinese say, dead to her own family. A boy, on the other hand, stays in his father's house, even after he is married. So all fathers and mothers are very anxious to have sons, who will stay in the house and worship their ancestors. When a girl is born her parents are usually sad. A father who had four daughters was much disappointed when a fifth girl was born. He did not like her and named her "Enough Hawks," because he thought girls

were like hawks, which eat much but are of no use. Another father named his daughter "Ought-to-have-been-a-boy."

Since the poor girls are so unwelcome, they are often badly treated. They are generally obliged to stay in the house and work until their poor, tightly-bound little feet ache miserably. They rarely have any fun like the Japanese girls. When there is a feast, they have to wait until every one else has eaten. Sometimes they are taken to a fair. Then they have a fine time, especially if there is a theater. A Chinese theater is not at all like ours. It is out of doors. The poor people commonly stand during the performance or else sit on the ground. A few who are rich have seats provided for them. The performance of a single piece lasts all day or perhaps two or three days, and it is fearfully dull for foreigners. There is no scenery. If an actor wants the people to know that he is in a palace, he merely says, "Now we are in a palace in Peking," and the spectators are left to imagine the rest. Still the Chinese enjoy it immensely, and the girls never have a better time than at a theater.

When a girl is to be married, she does not know anything about it beforehand. Sometimes she is engaged when she is only a baby. Usually she is married by the time she is fifteen years old. In many cases she is not allowed to see the boy whom she is to marry, for that would be considered immodest. He, too, knows nothing about her, and is scarcely older than she. The parents arrange everything, and the children do as they are told. When the wedding day comes the poor girl has to say good-by to all her friends and is taken among strangers whom she has never seen. Her face is covered as she rides in her red sedan, and when she reaches her husband's house she is carried through the door pickaback

by an old woman. Once inside the house, the cloth is taken from her face, and her new relatives for the first time take a good look at her. If they do not like her appearance, they say mean things such as, "How ugly she is!" "What big feet she has!" or "See how straight her eyes are, just like those of a foreign devil!" In her new home she must do exactly as her mother-in-law says. The oldest person in the house rules all the rest, and even a son is not allowed to do anything without his father's permission, although the son may be a man fifty years old.

Chinese Schools. Chinese boys are very much petted at home. Those who are poor have to work from morning till night, gathering fuel, helping on the farm, or tending the shop; but the parents are always proud of



A group of Chinese schoolboys

them. When a boy goes to school he ceases to be petted. Teachers are expected to be very severe and to whip the boys a great deal. One day a foreigner was riding horseback along a narrow Chinese street. As he came opposite a door he heard a murmuring sound of voices, and stopped to see what was going on within. As he halted at the door, he saw thirty or forty Chinese boys sitting on benches. All were reading aloud. One boy was in front on his knees with his back to the teacher, who held a book and a rod. He was reciting his lesson but squatted with his back to the teacher that he might not by any possibility see the book. As the foreigner came to the door, all the scholars stopped reading, and the room became still. That made the teacher angry, and he brought down his rod with a whack on the desk and swore at the boys. At once every one of them began to read away at the top of his voice. The stranger stepped forward a little, and again there was dead silence. The teacher became furious. He struck the nearest boys with the rod, stamped on the floor, and swore horribly, while the boys all shouted at the tops of their voices. The teacher apologized to the American for having such very ill-mannered scholars. It was their business to learn page after page of the Chinese classics by heart. They read the passages over and over again to learn them, doing it out loud in order that the teacher might be sure that they were at work. When they stopped reading, it was as bad as if in an American school every boy and girl should suddenly begin to whisper when a stranger stepped in.

According to the old system of education, after the boys had learned many books by heart and were able to write the Chinese characters, they were taught to write compositions and poetry. Those who were bright went

at length to the city of their district to be examined. If they passed the examination, they studied more and tried a harder examination which lasted about three days. If they passed this, they were allowed to wear a special black button on their hats, and they had the title of learned man or scholar. They also had a chance to become officials. Before they could reach the higher offices, however, they must pass one or two more very difficult examinations. The higher examinations took place in the provincial capitals and in Peking. The candidates for examination all went to a great building full of thousands of little bare cells furnished with nothing but a seat, a brush for writing, some ink, and some paper. Each candidate was searched to see that he had no written papers or books with him. Then he was given a subject on which to write. He must stay until he had finished his task. If he wrote carelessly, or erased even a single word, his examination was almost sure to be a failure.

Only about one in ten of those who tried the examinations passed, and often the number was much less. In many cases the same man tried again and again for ten or twenty years or even all his life. Sometimes a grandfather, a father, and a son all took the same examinations. Those who passed the highest examinations were very much honored and received high positions in the government. It was worth while to work hard to pass them, and the Chinese have more industry and patience in such work than have any other nation.

Formerly the subjects of examination were merely ancient Chinese books, written hundreds or thousands of years ago. The student with the best memory had the best chance of passing. During recent years the system of examinations has been a good deal changed. Boys

and young men are now educated in subjects like those studied in American colleges. The Chinese reverence for education still persists, however. The people have so much respect for it that they think it wicked to use printed paper for any ordinary purpose. In Shanghai and many other cities it is considered an act of merit to pick up bits of written or printed paper and put them in special baskets prepared for them. When the baskets are full, the papers are carefully burned and the ashes are scattered in the river.

Chinese Food. The Chinese have so many interesting habits and customs that we have not the space to talk about half of them. In the delta of the Yangtse-kiang and all the way up the river for a thousand miles, the people raise great quantities of rice, which grows much better here than in the north. Most of the people in this region and farther south live on rice, which they eat with chopsticks. Many people think that the Chinese pick up their rice with the chopsticks, but often that is not the case. Usually they merely hold the bowl of rice up to their mouths and shove the food in without lifting it.

Everyone has heard that the Chinese eat such animals as cats, dogs, rats, and mice. This is partly true. The poor people eat them because they cannot get any other kind of meat, but they are not the common food of the Chinese any more than woodchucks and possums are the common food of Americans. Still, the Chinese do eat things that seem to us very queer. In the cities one often meets a man with a long pole over his shoulder, from either end of which hang dozens of flat brown objects shaped like toy violins. They are ducks that have been pressed flat and dried. The shops contain dainties such as lily bulbs, green algæ from the rice fields, shark's skin, deer's sinews kept till they

are soft, eggs that we should call rotten, and birds' nests from the islands of the sea. The birds' nests are made of seaweed, which the birds gather on the shore. The Chinese are like other nations which have a very dense population. They have learned to eat almost everything that can possibly be used as food.

The Use of Fish. One of the commonest kinds of food is fish. Fish are carried about in tubs just as in Japan and Chosen. Some are caught by cormorants, others in nets, and some are raised in ponds. An Englishman was very much surprised one day to see an old man jump into a muddy pond as if he wanted to commit suicide; but in a minute out came the Chinese with two fish in his hands. The Chinese on the lower Yangtse often gather fish eggs and place them in ponds. When the fish have grown, they catch as many as possible with nets. Then they let out most of the water, and men, women, and children wade into the deep mud up to their waists and catch the fish in their hands.

Along the Yangtse-kiang. In going up the Yangtse River one passes the Grand Canal. It was built hundreds of years ago, and extends nearly 500 miles to the northwest, connecting the plains of Pechili with those at the mouth of the Yangtse. It is one of the longest canals in the world. Some miles above the mouth of the canal lies Nanking, which means "Southern Capital," just as Peking means "Northern Capital." It was the capital of China hundreds of years ago. Farther upstréam the Yangtse flows through three great basins. In one of these lies the Lake of Poyang, and in the next, the Lake of Tungting. The country around the lakes consists of smooth plains, very thickly settled and threaded in every direction with canals and streams. In summer when the monsoons cause floods,

the plains become vast shallow lakes. For miles and miles nothing can be seen except water with lines of trees extending across it.

The Basin of Szechwan. The next basin, that of Szechwan, or the Red Basin, is of quite a different sort. It lies among the western plateaus as a huge hollow. To get to it, it is necessary to cross the mountains or else to go up the rapids of the Yangtse through the gorges of Ichang. Here the great river flows swiftly between lofty precipices. Boats must be towed up by men on the shore or in the water. On either side temples to the spirits of the place are perched high on the rocks. The gorges and rapids are due to the fact that the river flows across granite rocks. Above the gorges one enters the Red Basin, a hilly country and one of the best parts of China. Lying in the region where the winds are cooled as they rise to the great plateau of Tibet farther west, Szechwan has plenty of rain. The people have a proverb that in Szechwan there are so many clouds that the dogs bark when they see the sun. Thanks to its abundant rains the Red Basin has few famines, and the people are not so poor as those of other regions.

Chinese Names. The upper part of the gorge by which the Yangtse passes from Szechwan to the plains of the lower river is called "Yellow Cat," and the lower part, "Moonshine." Most Chinese names seem to us odd when translated. Stores and hotels have such names as "Righteousness and Peace," "Kindness and Justice," "Unselfish Generosity," or "Friendship and Fidelity." A baby is often called by the name of the first thing that its father happens to see after its birth. One man had four children named Cart, Basket, Chicken, and Dog. The next child was born when its grandmother was

seventy years old, and was called Seventy. The last was simply called Number Six. In another family the first boy was quite heavy, so he was called Stone; the next, a girl, who was plump, was called Little Fat One; and still the next, being quite dark, was called Little Black One. In one case a father and mother had four girls, but no boy. At length a boy was born. They were very much afraid the demons, in which they believe so strongly, would harm the boy, so they called him Slave Girl, in order to fool the demons into thinking that he was a girl. All these are what are called "milk names." When a child grows up, or rather when a girl is married or a boy begins to wear a cue, they receive new names. The commonest family names are Chang, Wang, Li, and Chao. If a man's family name is Wang, he may be called Wang Spring-flowers, and his brothers may be Wang Spring-fragrance, Wang Spring-fields, and Wang Spring-showers.

CHAPTER XXII

SOUTHERN CHINA

The Mountainous Drowned Coast of South China. South of Shanghai and the Yangtse River the great plains of northern China come to an end. Their flat, monotonous expanse gives place to beautiful mountains rising boldly from the sea. Here, as in Asia Minor and many other places, the land has at some time gone down a little, so that the drowned coast is fringed with islands and deeply indented with bays. The great city of Foochow, halfway from Shanghai to Hong-kong, lies on the drowned lower portion of the Min River, a few miles inland. The Min has often been compared to the Hudson where it passes through the Catskills; but the Min is more beautiful than the Hudson, because high mountains rise close to, instead of far back from, the water.



A Chinese junk on the Min River at Foochow

Foochow and the Mountains of Fokien. As one looks down upon Foochow from the surrounding hills, the view, like that of most Chinese cities, consists largely of square miles of dull gray tiles, the roofs of innumerable low houses between which run paved paths too narrow to be called streets. Beyond the city blue mountains rise in the distance, and the silvery river winds through a richly-cultivated valley. On the shining stream black dots can be seen. They are rafts of timber floating down to be exported to all parts of China. The mountains of Fokien, as the province of Foochow is called, are one of the few parts of China where large forests remain. The mountains are too rugged for cultivation in many places, and as they have abundant rain, forests grow luxuriantly.

The lower hills and the gently sloping portions of the



Picturesque Foochow. Looking across its many tiled roofs to the mountains which rise in the distance

mountains are covered with orchards, or are cut into terraces whose beautiful pale-green color shows that



Irrigation of crops near Foochow. Raising water by treading .

they are being used for rice. Everywhere the rice grows in standing water green with scum. Men and buffaloes are busily at work turning endless chains fitted with buckets which lift the water from terrace to terrace. In southern China, where the monsoon rains begin earlier than in the north, the first rains are usually very severe. In April and May freshets often rush down the mountains, sweeping away the rice and destroying the crops of the season.

The Unwarlike Spirit of China. Foochow is one of the few great cities of China where a Manchu garrison remained until the present century. When the Manchus conquered China, nearly three hundred years ago, they put garrisons in various cities to prevent the Chinese from rebelling. During all the years since that time the Manchu soldiers lived a lazy life. They did no work, because the government paid them for being soldiers.

They have had to fight very little, because the Chinese are a peaceful people and rarely make war except when famine or trouble rouses them. Their character illustrates the way in which prolonged isolation may cause a once war-like people to become mild and fond of peace at any price. The Chinese to-day regard the profession of soldier as ignoble and unworthy of a man of high position.

In some ways the unwarlike character of the Chinese is a serious defect. For ages they have been superior to the nations around them. Long ago they fought and conquered, but during the past two or three thousand years or more they have rarely met an enemy. Invaders have come into the northern parts of the country, to be sure, but the vast majority of the Chinese have never seen them and have only heard of them by rumor. Shut away from the rest of the world and under no necessity to fight, the Chinese have gradually lost the warlike spirit. In itself this may be a good thing, but with it there has gone a loss of ambition and of the aggressive character which makes people undertake hard tasks and delight in finishing them in spite of difficulties. Formerly most nations were trained in this spirit by fighting. In modern times, when fighting is less admired, the same spirit is fostered by exploring and settling new lands, by making inventions and discoveries, by the expansion of commerce, or by the spreading abroad of religious and scientific ideas in the face of opposition. China has done none of these things for many hundred years. Unless her people awaken to the necessity of greater ambition and aggressiveness, the country is not likely to progress rapidly. Japan has far outstripped her ancient teacher, largely because the Japanese are one of the most aggressive and ambitious of races.

Chinese Amusements. The degenerate soldiers of the Manchu garrison of Foochow are only one of many evidences that in former times the Chinese were a more energetic race than now. Another such evidence is seen in the Dragon Festival, which is observed in the spring throughout most of China. Foochow is as good a place as any in which to see the festival. The river is covered with long, narrow boats full of men. Sometimes there are as many as sixty men in one boat, all paddling for dear life. Some of the boats dart hither and thither. Others race, while the crowds on the river banks yell and cheer, as Americans do at a ball game. The boats are supposed to be looking for a certain wise man who fell into the river hundreds of years ago and was drowned.

Although the Chinese have other festivals, this is the only one where they take any violent exercise. They think it a very silly thing for Americans and Europeans to play games like tennis and football, where they get all tired out. Chinese men often fly kites, but they do not like to do anything active. The children are much like their parents and have very few games. Perhaps the Chinese have so much work to do that they have not much energy left for games.

The New Year's Festival. The greatest festival in China is New Year's Day, which comes in February. Everybody then takes two weeks' vacation. Every family cooks the best food that it can afford, which is often merely wheat cakes or dumplings of flour flavored with meat. All who are able to do so put on new clothes, and the others don their brightest old clothes. Those who are away always try to get home, even more than people do in America at Christmas and Thanksgiving.

On the last evening of the old year the whole family



goes through the ceremony of making offerings and saying prayers to their ancestors. The next morning



New Year's Day in China. Two Chinese girls meeting on the street are exchanging greetings

the men, not the boys and girls, touch off bunch after bunch of firecrackers. Then they all go to the family graveyard with offerings for the dead; and after that the men and boys of the younger generation call on all their friends and relatives. At every place they are offered something to eat. It is not polite to refuse, so they eat far more than is good for them.

The Chinese, as we have seen, are the most industrious people in the world, but at New Year's time they give themselves up entirely to feasting and playing. As they have few good amusements, many spend the time in smoking opium and in gambling. Merchants do not take down their shutters, but one can hear the clerks noisily gambling inside. Innkeepers will not open their doors, but landlord and servants are all gambling together within. They will not stop to feed a traveler's animals or to get him a meal. "Go away," they call,

when the traveler pounds on the door. "This is no time to travel. You ought to know better than to interfere with other people's pleasure!"

Opium Smoking. Gambling and opium smoking are the two worst vices in China. Opium is made from a species of large poppy with beautiful flowers of various pale shades of red, pink, purple, and lavender, as well as white. After the petals have fallen, the seed vessels grow large and juicy. Men and women cut gashes in them with little knives so that the juice runs out. It dries into a sticky gum, from which opium is extracted. Those who smoke the drug become absolutely stupid. If a man once begins to smoke opium he grows very fond of it, for it makes him forget his troubles; but he soon loses all interest in his work. After a few years he becomes even more useless and more to be pitied than a drunkard. The Chinese government forbids the use of opium and tries hard to prevent it. Little by little the people are beginning to realize how much harm it does.

Debt-Paying. We ought to mention one other new-year habit—a good one. On or before the last day of the old year everyone is supposed to pay all his debts. Most people do this, for the Chinese as a race are very honest; but many are so poor, or so much in debt, that they cannot pay everything. Early one New Year's morning a Chinese was seen going about the streets with a lighted lantern. "What are you doing with that lantern?" asked an American who chanced to meet him. "It is light enough to see without it. The sun is up."

"Oh," answered the Chinese, "Wan Lee owes me ten dollars. Last night I went around to his house to get it, but he knew I would come and so took care not to be at home. I am going around this morning to catch him by surprise, but I don't want to hurt his feelings. You

know it is not proper to ask a man to pay a debt after the New Year has come in, so I am carrying a lantern as a sign that I think it is still last night."

The Chinese are very fond of pretending. They will do almost anything in order not to seem impolite.

Chinese Tea. Fokien is one of the best places in the world for tea. Its climate is so warm that almost no snow falls in winter, and the granite rocks of the mountains furnish just the sort of soil that the tea bush likes. The bush is something like that of the huckleberry. The plants are set out in rows from three to five feet apart each way. They are kept down to a height of about a foot and a half, since small bushes have softer leaves than large ones. In April, June, and September, Chinese women, girls, boys, and sometimes men pick all but the larger leaves and put them in piles where they wilt in the sun for a day. Next they are placed in bamboo baskets and are trampled upon by barefooted men to break the stems and stiff parts. Then they are rubbed with the hands to make them roll up. Finally they are dried completely. The most delicate kinds are dried only in the sun, but most of the tea which comes to America is dried in ovens. The best tea is made from the smallest leaves and buds.

The people who pick tea are paid only ten to twenty cents a day. A good picker can pick eight or ten pounds of green leaves, which make only two or three pounds of dry tea. If the pickers had to be paid one or two dollars a day, as they would in America, tea would cost so much that only the rich could drink it. It is well for tea drinkers that the people of China, Japan, and India do not receive such wages as those of America and Europe.

Travelers and Strange Sights. The men who travel in Fokien to buy tea see some odd sights. In the

mountains near Foochow one of them met some men with wheelbarrows, which they had to lift over steep,



Itinerant barbers on their way to Foochow, plying their trade by the roadside

rocky places in the path. Next came a man driving black pigs with grass shoes on their feet. A little later, in a pretty wooded valley beside a mountain brook, the tea buyer stopped to talk with some men who were carrying big baskets full of ducks.

"We are taking the ducks to feed in the rice fields near Foochow," said one of the Chinese. "Up in the mountains the fields are all dry. How briskly you walk for so old a man. How old are you?"

"Thirty-two," said the tea buyer, who was an Englishman. "How old did you think?"

"I thought you must be a hundred," replied the Chinese, "your hair is so white."

The Chinese like to be asked their age, so this question was quite polite. The Englishman had very light brown hair. As the Chinese all have straight black hair, they thought the Englishman must once have had the same kind and that now it had changed.

A Buddhist Holy Man. When the Chinese understood about the Englishman's hair, they asked another question: "Have you seen the holy man who lives here on the hillside? Long ago his soul lived in a dog. When the dog died the soul went into an ox; when that died, the soul was born in a baby boy, who became a pirate when he grew up. At last the pirate died and his soul was born again in this man, who became a priest as soon as he grew up. The priest was so sorry for the evil that he had done in former lives that he had some friends build a little room of rough stones around him, leaving no door or window and only a few holes. There he has lived for twenty-four years without coming out. He is very holy. When he is born again he will be a saint."

The Englishman went to see the so-called holy man, who proved to be very dirty and disagreeable. His finger nails were three inches long and looked like great claws. Each one was inclosed in a sheath of bamboo to keep it from being broken. Many Chinese let their nails grow as long as possible, to show that they do not work; for people who work are sure to break their nails. Fashionable ladies often sheathe their nails in silver.

Buddhism. The holy man with the long nails was a Buddhist. Long ago the Buddhist religion came to China from India. It teaches many good things, but it is mixed with a great deal that is not right or true. It is one of the great religions of the world, and a devout Buddhist is as noble and good as a man of any religion. The practices of Buddhism, however, like the practices of so many religions, are so distasteful to us that it is hard for us to appreciate its truly admirable qualities. Buddhism has many followers in China. The other religions are Taoism, which teaches a belief in all manner of evil spirits, and Confucianism, which teaches the

worship of ancestors. Many Chinese believe in all three religions. The Buddhists believe that when a person dies



Tablets before the shrine of a Chinese god, offered by grateful worshippers in return for blessings granted

his soul goes into a new-born child or animal. One person, they think, may lead a hundred lives or more, unless he becomes good enough to become a Buddha or saint.

Sometimes people pray to be born anew in a different condition. At a temple in Ningpo a missionary saw two or three thousand women praying. A bystander explained to him that they were praying to be born again as men. Their lives as women were so miserable that they wanted to die. All Chinese women, however, are not miserable, and some are much honored. At a city gate one often sees arches or tablets erected by permission of the Emperor in memory of virtuous widows.

The Vegetation of Southern China. South of Foochow the climate is so warm that crops can be raised in winter as well as in summer. Upon the terraced hillsides the vivid green of rice fields alternates with the darker tint of the sugar cane. On the slopes are tea plantations

and near them fields of cotton, bright with gay colored blossoms, and orange trees standing in fragrant, fruitful rows. Elsewhere splendid vistas are formed by the slender trunks of palm trees, which yield fibers and other useful products. Among the trees of southern China some of the most peculiar species produce oil and tallow from which candles are made. Everywhere thickets of bamboos wave their feathery heads in the winds, thirty feet above the ground.

The Bamboo. In southern China the rice plant is the most useful of all the things that grow, because it furnishes most of the food of the people. The next plant in usefulness is the bamboo. If a man wants to do so, he can have his whole house of bamboo, including walls, roof, and the mats on the floor. At his meals he may sit on a bamboo chair before a bamboo table. At dinner he may eat, with bamboo chopsticks, soft, green bamboo sprouts which were cooked over a bamboo fire, and served in a bamboo bowl. Then a servant may wash off the table with a bamboo cloth. Meanwhile, the master is likely to fan himself with a bamboo fan. Probably he will follow the common tropical custom of lying down for a siesta during the hot part of the day, from one o'clock to four, upon a bed and pillow likely to be of bamboo. When he gets up, he may light a bamboo pipe, and, taking a brush with a handle of the same material, write on paper made of bamboo. Finally, he may put on his bamboo sandals, take an umbrella and basket—both of the same useful plant—and cross a suspension bridge made of bamboo.

The Si-kiang. The Si-kiang, or West River, the great stream of southern China, rises in the remote plateau of Yunnan. There, as is so common in relatively inaccessible regions, the people are of various races.



Canton showing the new "Bund" or parkway along the river

Part are wild natives called Lolos and Miaotse, who probably were driven into the mountains when the Chinese invaded China thousands of years ago. Others are a mixed race who profess Mohammedanism, and still others, pure Chinese. Farther down the river all the people are Chinese. Throughout most of its course the Si-kiang flows among mountains. At its mouth, however, there is a delta plain like that of the Hwang-ho and of the Yangtse-kiang. As might be expected here, the population is very dense, and there are several great cities. Of these the chief is easily Canton—the first of all Chinese cities to be visited by Europeans.

The River People of Canton. Canton is such a crowded place and there is so much business on the river that nearly 300,000 people, or more than as many as are found in Kansas City, live in boats on the water. There are many people there who have never walked on the land during their whole lives. It is said that the babies born on the boats can swim when first thrown into the water—almost as soon as they can walk. Their parents always strap a joint of bamboo on their backs to keep them afloat and to afford a good handle with which to fish them up if they fall into the water. Some of the boats at Canton are very beautiful. They have eyes painted in front, for, as the Chinese say, "How can a boat go straight if it has no eyes?"

A Nation Apart. China is full of strange and interesting things, as we have already seen. Many of them are due wholly, or in part, to the fertility of the plains and basins watered by the abundant monsoon rains. Others are caused by the mountains and plateaus and sea, which till recently have shut China off from the rest of the world. Many habits and characteristics of the Chinese have arisen because of the great density of population

and the frequent famines. These famines are caused sometimes by floods, but more often by droughts. Because of all these things the Chinese have always been a nation apart from the rest of the world. Their customs, their language, and their mode of thinking are all different from those of the Western World.

Dense populations and frequent famines cause great poverty. Poverty causes ignorance, and ignorance tends to encourage superstition. Superstition makes people very unwilling to change their habits, and so the Chinese have changed but little in a thousand years. On the other hand, the difficulties of life have made the Chinese very industrious, very economical, and very patient; for otherwise they could not live. After ages of isolation, China at last is in touch with the rest of the world. She is beginning to learn new lessons after a long period of stagnation. There are signs that, as more and more of her people become enlightened, ambition will arise and a spirit of worthy aggressiveness which will lead her to get rid of famines, poverty, gambling, opium smoking, and superstition. The process may be a long one, but when it is finished the many good qualities of China may make her equal to any nation in the world.

CHAPTER XXIII

INDO-CHINA AND THE MALAY PENINSULA

Position and People. The southeastern corner of Asia does not properly belong to eastern or to southern Asia. It is well called Indo-China, for it lies between India and China without being a part of either. Its people are a mixture of the yellow-skinned Mongolian race of eastern Asia and the olive-skinned Caucasian race of northern India. To these has been added the brown Malay race which gives its name to the long southern peninsula.

The Races Which Have Come to Indo-China by Sea. It is easy to reach Indo-China by sea on all sides save the north. Centuries ago the Malays came in square-rigged boats from the islands of Sumatra and Java and occupied the southern peninsula. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese have settled along the east coast, coming partly by land but chiefly by sea. On the west coast the English from India have advanced, step by step, and have developed an enormous trade, which has caused the growth of great cities such as Penang, or George Town, and Singapore. More recently the French have come to Indo-China, and are trying to do on the east coast what England has done on the west.

The Races Which Have Come by Land. The British on the west, the Malays on the south, and the Chinese and French on the east have come to Indo-China by sea or along the coast. The majority of the people, however, came by land from the north. On that side the great plateaus of Tibet and Yunnan extend down into Indo-China. As we have seen in an earlier chapter,

the tremendous river gorges and lofty mountains which diversify the plateaus form a barrier which separates India from China. Nevertheless, tribe after tribe has crossed this inhospitable region and has gradually pushed its way southward and eastward to the warm fertile plains of the Songkoi, Mekong, Menam, and Iráwadi rivers. Even now when famine comes upon the wild tribes of southwestern China, as it sometimes does in very dry years, they move to new regions in the hope of finding a better country. Sometimes, too, they are driven out by enemies. They cannot find a living in the mountains and plateaus of Tibet to the north, so they go south into Indo-China.

For hundreds and thousands of years tribes have kept coming into Indo-China, chiefly from China or Tibet but partly from India. To-day the country is filled with their mixed descendants, who form the races called Annamese in the east, Siamese and Shans in the middle, and Burmese in the west. Among all the native races of Indo-China only the Siamese still remain independent. They have tried to learn from Europeans and to reform their government, and so they have not been absorbed by England or France. Nevertheless, much of the territory of Siam has been taken away. The only part which the native kings still rule entirely is the valley of the Menam River. Even there the wealth of the country is fast passing into the hands of the energetic Chinese; for the Siamese, like the rest of the people of Indo-China, are lazy and pleasure-loving.

Tropical Forests. With the exception of the southern part of Arabia the countries which we have thus far studied in Asia have all been situated in the Temperate Belt. Indo-China lies in the Hot Belt. Its climate is so warm and moist that trees and plants grow

luxuriantly. The plains, which are flooded by rivers, are covered with grass and reeds, while the rest of the



In a tropical forest where the ferns are thirty feet high

country is shrouded in dense forests. Sometimes the forest consists of a jungle of bamboos so thick and interlaced with creeping plants that one cannot advance ten feet without stopping to cut a path.

In other places the forest consists of huge trees rising a hundred feet or more. A person walking on the ground sees nothing but a gloomy vista of smooth tree trunks like the columns of a vast cathedral. Not a flicker of sunshine can be detected, not a rustle of leaves, and scarcely a sign of life or color. High above his head lianas, twining like huge stems of the woodbine or wild grape, hang from the lofty trunks in long festoons. Rarely a delicate orchid is visible. For days one can wander in such a forest and seem to be in a world without life. But come to a clearing or climb to some point where the upper parts of the trees are in sight,

at once all is changed. Life seems to run riot. The top of the forest is like a vast green mat. The trees want light and air, and each strives to get above its neighbors. Those that are in the shade are sure to die. None can live except those which stretch their heads far up toward the sky. In the tree tops flowers of brilliant colors are blooming; songless parrots and other birds of bright colors flit about; and chattering monkeys swing from branch to branch. Here a palm raises its head heavily loaded with cocoanuts. Elsewhere the teak tree towers in stately grandeur.

Heavy Hardwood Trees. We shall see more of the teak tree later. It is one of the hardwood trees for which tropical countries are famous. Some of the teaks are so hard that it is almost impossible to cut them with an ordinary knife. They are very heavy, too. In Siam a foreigner, with much difficulty, once cut some of these trees and made a raft. He meant to float down the Menam River; but when he and his men pushed the raft into the water, to his great surprise it at once sank to the bottom. It was too heavy to float. The hardwood of these heavy trees is very valuable for making handsome furniture. In order to float the teak down the rivers, the natives make rafts of bamboo, which is so light that it supports the heavy logs.

We are wont to think of tropical trees as being green all the year round. This is not wholly true. The forest as a whole has a green appearance most of the time, but each tree sheds its leaves and takes a rest every year. The leaves of some trees turn red or yellow or brown just as they do with us. During the dry season many kinds of trees are bare of leaves, and at this time many of them blossom. It is a wonderful sight to see a leafless tree covered with splendid red or yellow flowers like the most

beautiful of those in our gardens. Many of the trees do not shed the old leaves until the new ones come out. It is this which makes the tropical forest appear green at all seasons.

Tropical Animals. In all parts of the world the animals depend on the plants. If there are many plants, there are sure to be many wild animals unless man has killed them off. If the plants die down in winter or if they are covered with snow, it is hard for the animals. They can stand the cold weather of winter, but they cannot stand hunger. Accordingly, the number of wild animals grows steadily larger as one goes from cold or dry regions to warm, moist ones. In Indo-China wild creatures are found in great variety. The largest is the elephant, the chief beast of burden. The hippopotamus and alligator live in the rivers. Tigers, leopards, and a host of flesh eaters live in the jungle. They catch the deer, antelope, and other grass-eating animals which feed on the abundant plant life. Tigers often eat people. If the natives think that one is near, they build a fire to frighten him away, and pray to the supposed spirit of the place to protect them. They think that the tiger is possessed of an evil genius and would be angry if he heard his name. So they speak of him in whispers, and refer to him only as "it," or "that fellow."

The tree tops are alive with monkeys, especially in the Malay Peninsula. Sometimes they are tamed as pets. One day a traveler in a Malay village wanted some cocoanuts. The native chief, whose guest he was, called to a big ape, "Go up that palm tree, and pick some ripe cocoanuts." The animal climbed up and carefully picked out three or four fine ripe ones and threw them down. "Now some green ones," said the chief; and the

monkey threw down some that were almost ripe. The Malay then cut a round hole in each unripe nut, and poured out the milk, which has a pleasant, slightly acid taste. When the milk had been drunk, he opened the ripe cocoanuts for the meat. It takes a cocoanut fourteen months to ripen, although our fruits take only four or five.

Monkeys, as everyone knows, are very fond of teasing. One day a crocodile lay on a sandy river bank in the sun with his huge mouth wide open and his beady eyes almost shut. Some monkeys came along and began to tease him. One swung down from the trees and made little snatches at his mouth, taking good care not to get caught. Then they all wanted to do the same thing; for what one does, all must do. In trying to outdo one another, one monkey put his hand too far into the great mouth. The crocodile, which had seemed to be asleep, suddenly snapped his jaws together, caught the poor monkey by the arm, and hurried off into the water with him. Monkeys are a good deal like people; they often get into trouble when they try to show off.

Difficulty of Farming among Tropical Forests. In China, Persia, Turkey, and most of the countries of Asia the inhabitants suffer from lack of trees. In Indo-China exactly the opposite is the case. In the forested regions when the natives want to plant rice or sugar cane, they must first get rid of the trees. They cut them down and leave them to dry for a few months. Then they kindle a fire and thus clear a space for a farm. For two or three years rice and other crops are raised, but by that time bamboos have begun to grow. The natives have no means of plowing deeply and are too lazy to keep the fields weeded. The easiest plan is to abandon the old clearing and make a fresh one, sometimes close at hand

and sometimes at a distance. Outside the plains the whole country is dotted with clearings of this kind,



A native village. The houses near the river are on bamboo stilts grown up with bamboos. When the clearing fires are burning, sounds like gunshots are often heard—the noise of exploding bamboo stems.

The Method of Building Houses. One might think that the natives of Indo-China would be sorry to change the location of their fields so often. They do not mind at all, however, not even if they have to build new houses. It is an easy matter to build a house in Indo-China, for there is an unlimited supply of wood close at hand, and the fronds of a palm tree make a fine thatch. The houses do not have to be warm. The only necessity is that they afford shelter from the rain.

In moist, tropical countries malarial fevers prevail. Even the natives suffer from them, and Europeans are likely to die from them unless great care is used. When one sleeps on or near the ground he is very apt to get the fever, especially during the floods of the rainy season. Moreover there is some danger that tigers will

come and kill people lying on the ground. Accordingly, in Indo-China a large proportion of the houses are little huts consisting chiefly of thick-thatched roofs with a steep slope to shed the rain. These huts are raised to a height of five feet or more, on stilts of bamboo stuck into the earth. The walls are scarcely more than mats. The floor is, in many cases, nothing but poles laid an inch or two apart. All the waste materials from the house are put through the cracks in the floor; pigs and other animals are tied underneath, and the ground under the houses is often filthy.

Bathing. The people, themselves, are clean. In most parts of Indo-China they bathe a great deal, as people who are well clothed must do in a warm country. In the north the natives bathe freely in the rivers, not caring who sees them. The inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula, however, are Mohammedans and do not like to be seen when they undress, so they build bathing sheds just large enough for a single person. Around these sheds they put fences to keep out crocodiles.

The Effect of a Warm Climate. It is easy to make a living in Indo-China. The people who raise rice on the plains or those who catch fish in the sea or those who cultivate palm trees and bananas in the hills can all get food enough for themselves and their families with very little work. They do not have to store up much for the future, for crops ripen at almost all times of the year. The climate is so warm that no one feels like working. All these things make the people of Indo-China lazy and idle. They do not want to work; and they do not care whether they have much or little to wear or to look at, so long as they have enough to eat.

One would think that in a country so rich in food there would be a very dense population, but this is not the case.

So many natives die of fevers and epidemics, so many are killed by wild beasts or by their human enemies, and so many perish in slave raids that the population has never become dense like that of China and northern India. Many of these things are changing now. The constant stream of Chinese coming into the country and the influence of European trade and government are beginning to check some evils — such as constant wars and slavery — and the population is increasing.

Monsoon Rains. Although the climate of Indo-China is always warm, because the country lies so near the equator, there are two distinct seasons. One is the time of the northeast monsoon — a wind which blows very steadily from the northeast, bringing rain to the coast of Annam and to most parts of the Malay Peninsula. West of the mountains of Annam, however, the wind has lost its moisture and accordingly the winter months, during which it blows, are a dry season. In spite of the high temperature plants do not grow well during this period. In the other season, from May to September, the wind blows from the southwest or south. As the wind goes toward the north and rises over the many mountains, it grows cooler and cooler. Therefore, it gives up the abundant moisture which it has gathered in the Indian Ocean. Except on the east coast of Annam, which is shut off by high mountains, heavy rains fall in all parts of the country, and plants thrive luxuriantly.

Contrast Between the Wet and Dry Seasons. A good example of the difference between the dry season and the wet season is seen in the plain or low plateau of Khorat, lying a little northeast of Bangkok between the Menam and Mekong rivers in Siam. A caravan was once crossing this plain in summer with ox carts. Every day rain

fell, as it does with us sometimes in summer when, as we say, the water falls in sheets. The air was so damp that one's clothes felt wet and sticky all the time, and shoes or other articles shut up in a chest, in a day or two, grew white with mold. In the best places the rough road was ankle deep in mud, and in the bad places the clumsy oxcarts sank to the hubs. Sometimes the travelers came to a low plain three or four miles wide, and had to wade across it in water up to the knees. Rivers rushed along, carrying huge trunks of trees and spreading far over their banks. Sometimes it was possible to wade across them; at other times rafts had to be built. One day a raft was built beside such a river. When it was pushed out into the broad, muddy current, the raging stream carried it away with a rush, breaking the ropes that held it. The caravan went upstream to a place where there was less current. That day the rain slackened, and the next day it stopped. By the following morning the water had gone down four feet, and the raft was on dry land several miles down the river and a quarter of a mile from the diminished stream.

Five months later, near the end of the dry season, the same travelers passed that way again. They found their raft, not beside a rushing river, but near a few filthy pools of greenish water, in which pinkish-gray buffaloes had been wallowing. In places where they waded to the knees in water on the former journey, they now crossed brown plains which had been green with grass a month or two earlier. Now, too, the ankle-deep mud was replaced by fine dust which filled the road and was blown in clouds by the wind. Water was so scarce that on some nights the animals went thirsty.

In the Malay Peninsula rain falls in fair abundance at all seasons. In all other parts of Indo-China there is a

wonderful contrast between the dry and the wet seasons. In the mountains the water runs off rapidly. In the great plains, where most of the people live, it cannot flow away so fast and, therefore, floods the whole country. In such places it is easy to see that it is a good plan to build houses on stilts, or to live in floating house boats, as hundreds of thousands of people do at Bangkok.

Tongking and the French Colonies. We have spoken of many ways in which all parts of Indo-China are much alike. There are many other ways in which the various parts differ. The French colony of Tongking, in the northeast, is much like southern China in the habits of its people and in its climate and scenery. North of the rich delta of the Songkoi River the coast is bordered by a wonderful series of islands and drowned river mouths forming bays. The islands are composed of limestone which rises in steep cliffs to flat tops where green trees can be seen peeping over the edge. Allong Bay, in this region, is surrounded by great coal mines. One layer of coal is about eighty feet thick, and has an extent of hundreds of square miles. In America a layer of coal twelve feet thick is considered large.

The French have not been wise in some respects. They have tried to keep other people away from their colonies and to preserve all the trade for themselves by charging heavy taxes on all foreign goods. This has made it difficult for the colonies to grow. In another way the French have been extremely wise. They have constructed beautiful cities. Hanoi, the capital of Tongking, is one of the finest cities in the East. Its wide streets are well paved and its buildings are handsome. Everything has been done to keep it clean and to prevent the fevers which are so deadly to Europeans and Americans.

Annam. The coast of Annam is in some ways like the west coast of Asia Minor. Since the time, long ago, when the border of the land in this region sank below the sea, the short rivers running down from the mountains have filled up the gulfs with mud. To-day the habitable part of Annam consists of a great many little deltas forming a fringe of rich land between the sea and the barren hills. The strong northeast monsoon winds blowing against the coast make navigation difficult. Turan is the only good harbor. In some places the wind has caused currents which have built up long sand bars, behind which are pretty lagoons. Near Hue, the capital, a canal thirty miles long follows such lagoons.

The Annamese, with their big lips and high cheek bones, are an ugly people in appearance. They have the reputation of being surly and dishonest but fairly industrious for a tropical race. A proverb current in Indo-China shows how they are regarded. "A slave," runs the proverb, "is valuable according to his honesty. A Lao from the mountain districts is worth one hundred sixty dollars, a Cambodian from the Mekong delta is worth one hundred dollars, and an Annamese is such a liar that he is worth only forty dollars." In Annam, as in all parts of Indo-China except the Malay Peninsula, the women do more work than the men, not only at home but in public. In the markets women and girls tend the shops. On the streets they go about bearing on their shoulders long poles on the ends of which hang pails of fish, bunches of vegetables, or baskets of ducks.

Cochin-China: The Mekong and the Cambodian Ruins.

In approaching the delta of the Mekong—the southern part of the French possessions—the shore appears low, flat, and uninteresting. The sea is bordered by somber groves of the mangrove, which grows in salt water and

sends down roots from the branches. Behind the mangroves a strip of wet land supports a kind of palm tree much used for thatching roofs. Then come broad rice lands. Saigon, the capital, lies on a tributary of the Mekong. Like many other cities lying on the deltas of great rivers, it is some miles inland from the sea. It is a strange, lazy city. As one approaches it, houses are seen on stilts, with boats tethered under them. In the suburbs some of the houses are set on pillars of brick, while around them, surrounded by walls of cacti, rich gardens contain orange trees, pomeloes, cocoa palms, breadfruits, and bananas.

A large lake called Tale Sap lies two hundred miles northwest of Saigon. When the Mekong River is in flood during the rainy season, a branch flows into the great lake, causing it to rise. During the dry season the river falls rapidly, and the water from the lake begins to



View of the water front at Saigon

flow the other way, into the river. Thus the level of the lake varies thirty or even forty feet from season to season. It is three times as large in the early fall as in the early spring. Many fishermen live on its banks in houses perched high on bamboo posts. When the lake rises they take down their houses and move them back; when it falls they move their houses forward, so that they always live on the shore.

Many wonderful ruins are located north of the great inland lake of Tale Sap. A thousand or more years ago immigrants came into the country, probably from northern India. They had much more energy than the present inhabitants, for they had lived in a land where life was less easy and the climate more bracing than in Cochin-China. In honor of the Buddhist religion, which they brought from their former home, the new settlers built vast temples, which are still among the most wonderful buildings in the world. One finds them even in the midst of the uninhabited forest. Tropical trees now grow where throngs of people once gathered to worship, and climbing vines drape the walls and pull them to pieces. From top to bottom the older and better buildings are made of stone, including even the roofs, which are so carefully hewed and fitted that the stones still stand in place. The natives of Cambodia care little now for their great buildings. Almost the only visitors are foreigners.

Siam: The Tides of the Menam. Bangkok, a little way inland from the mouth of the Menam River, is one of the great cities of the East. Here the King of Siam has his gaudy palace and his stables for the sacred white elephants. Here too one finds beautiful modern streets and many signs of progress; but most of the people live in the fashion of their fathers, in houses perched

on piles or in boats on the river. Some of the people who live in boats pay rent for the places where they cast anchor. If they are not satisfied with the landlord or cannot pay the rent, they need only to pull up anchor and row away. Moving for them is a very easy matter.

The tides of the sea at Bangkok are very strange. In almost every other part of the world two high tides occur each day. At Bangkok at certain times there is only one, because for some peculiar reason tides coming from different directions meet and offset one another. If a high tide occurs at noon, there is none at midnight, as there would be in other places. After a day or two a little tide begins to be felt halfway between the noon tides. Day by day this increases and the other decreases until the two are equal. Then after ten or twelve days the tide which was formerly large disappears, and the one which began twelve days before is now the only tide. At Bangkok, as at most cities on deltas near the mouths of rivers, the tides are of great importance. A sand bar lies across the mouth of the Menam which can be crossed by steamers only at high tide. Many large ships have to be loaded outside the bar by means of Chinese sailboats.

Elephants. Siam is often called the Land of the White Elephant. White elephants are not really white but only pale gray or spotted with white. They are albinos. The Siamese believe that the soul of a king lives in every white elephant, which therefore deserves worship. Ordinary elephants are very useful in most parts of Indo-China and also in India. Every year a royal elephant hunt is conducted in Siam. Hundreds of men go out into the jungle, and place themselves at intervals of a few hundred feet so as to form a circle many miles in circumference. At a set time all move

toward the center, driving all the elephants within the circle inward to the vicinity of a great stockade. The huge animals are finally driven into this stockade by men mounted on the heads of tame elephants. Sometimes two hundred elephants are driven in at once. The great beasts are very wild and it is hard work to catch them. A long bamboo rope is thrown around the foot of an animal and the ends are fastened to two posts close together. Then as the elephant struggles to get free, the rope is gradually pulled in until the animal is fastened close to the posts. Next a tame elephant is brought up and is made to push the wild elephant over, after which another leg is tied.

When an elephant has been kept hungry a few days, it grows less wild, and after a little it learns to obey its master and to work in various ways most cleverly. The driver sits on the animal's great head and directs him by pressing with one leg or the other behind the big ears. When the elephant does not behave well, the driver prods him with a sharp hook. Passengers are carried on elephants' backs in big saddles called howdahs, which have on each side a little box to carry one person. The elephant is the only animal which can be used as a beast of burden in the thick jungle, especially in the wet season. When it comes to a tree blocking the way, it puts its great head against it and pushes it aside. If branches hang down where they would hit the passengers, it breaks them off with its trunk.

Teak. One of the greatest uses of elephants is in piling the heavy logs of the teak tree. The logs are cut in the highlands of upper Siam and Burma. First a tree is girdled, that is the bark is cut off in a ring near the bottom, which causes the tree to die. It is left for two years to dry, after which it is cut down and then

carried by an elephant to a river, down which it floats on a lumber raft to the sea. To get a teak tree to Bangkok



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Elephants piling teak in a timber yard in Rangoon

takes four years from the time it is first girdled. When the trees are to be piled up or loaded into vessels, the elephants lift the logs very carefully and balance them on their tusks. The intelligent animals carry them where the driver bids, and place them in symmetrical piles.

The elephant is the largest and strongest of animals, but it is afraid of many things. A trained elephant often shies at the sight of a small dog. The great creatures are said to be extremely afraid of mice. When they see one, they lift up their trunks and trumpet in abject terror for fear the mouse will run up their long nostrils. Yet the same elephants are not at all afraid of tigers.

Burma: Rice. In all parts of Indo-China rice grows abundantly. The Iráwadi valley in Burma is perhaps the best place for it. Rangoon is the greatest rice market in the world. Rice grows in a husk like oats. The husk, which sticks very closely to the grain, is removed

by pounding the kernels gently in a mill or by putting the grains between millstones which are just far enough apart to tear off the coat, and which often break the kernels. The inner skin of rice contains much food and ought to be eaten with the rest of the grain, but in America and Europe people like to have their rice pure white. To make it so, the husked rice is run through a mill where it is thrown against soft leather again and again, thus wearing off the surface and making the grains white and polished, and at the same time greatly injuring their taste and their value as food.

The Burmese. The Burmese are handsome people and some of the women are beautiful. Both men and women are very fond of pretty clothes and, like little children, love to have people look at them and praise them. In the mountains of Burma there are many wild tribes who wear almost no clothing. Instead of putting on gay garments, they prick figures in the skin and rub in blue, red, or brown coloring matter, so that their naked bodies are covered with designs like those of our wall papers. They think that this tattooing, as it is called, prevents them from becoming sick and makes it impossible for their enemies to hurt them.

Religion and Education. The Burmese and Siamese are Buddhists and are very religious people, and their countries are full of pagodas and monasteries. The monks who live in the monasteries wear long yellow robes. They go around the country begging in order to support the monasteries. Being forbidden to ask people for money, they merely hold out their bowls for the passer-by to put in whatever he chooses. All Burmese and Siamese men are supposed to become monks for some part of their lives, but do not do so. All who want an education, however, must go to the

monasteries, for there are no other schools except a few which have been established recently. When parents want their boys to study, they send them to a monastery to stay two or three years. Unfortunately, the monks teach them almost nothing except to read the holy Buddhist books. Not many centuries ago our own ancestors were educated in much the same way.

The Malays. While Burmese women have more freedom than those of any other Asiatic country except modern Japan, Malay women are kept shut up like those of Turkey. They are never allowed to see any men except their husbands, fathers, and brothers. If a man accidentally touches a veiled woman in a crowded street, it is considered a deadly insult. This is partly because the Malays are Mohammedans and partly because they have fiery tempers.

The Malay Peninsula: Tin and Edible Bird's-nests. The forests of the Malay Peninsula are the densest of all those in Indo-China. All parts of the peninsula contain tin, which is found, like gold, in beds of gravel, and looks like black sand. One of the most unusual products of this region is edible bird's-nests, which the Chinese eat. They are found on islands off the east coast of Indo-China from Annam to Singapore. They are made by a species of swallow or swift which gathers a special variety of seaweed and weaves it into a nest. The nests are rather tasteless to Europeans. When cooked they look like the kind of macaroni called vermicelli. They are so valuable that some of the Malay chiefs, who own the islands, keep soldiers there to prevent the nests from being stolen. The swifts build their nests on the sides of cliffs in almost inaccessible places. The only way to get them is by means of long poles or by letting men down with ropes from the top of the cliff.

At the present time half the people of the Malay Peninsula are Chinese. They work in the mines, raise pepper, export wood, and engage in many kinds of business. Many of them live in the two great cities of Penang and Singapore. At the beginning of the nineteenth century neither place had any inhabitants. To-day they are two of the world's important cities. Their growth is due to the extensive use of steamships and to the freedom which England has granted to all people to come to them and trade without paying taxes or customs. These two places, small in area but great in business, are of more importance to the world than all the rest of the Malay Peninsula. Trade worth millions of dollars passes through them every year. They show how great an influence England has had upon the trade of the East. In the next chapter we shall see how England is shaping the history of India and is altering the life of the people of that great country.

CHAPTER XXIV

INDIA

The Diversity of India. People often speak of India as if it were a single country inhabited by a single race. Really it consists of various countries inhabited by diverse races speaking many languages and professing several religions. India is only half as large as the United States, but it contains between three and four times as many people. In place of the one language which is spoken practically everywhere among us, India has one hundred twenty languages. Hindi, used in a large part of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, is spoken by as many people as there are in the United States. Bengali,



Among the snow-crowned summits of the Himdlayas in north India

which is used in the province of Bengal at the mouth of the Ganges and Brahmaputra, is spoken by half as



A home characteristic of the coast region of the Western Ghats, south India

many. Each of eighteen other languages is the tongue of from one to twenty million people; and of the remaining hundred, each is spoken by from a thousand to a million.

Imagine what the United States would be like if each section were inhabited by a separate race with its own language and habits. To illustrate: Suppose that California were full of Chinese, and Oregon and Washington of Japanese. Let the ancient Aztecs, who lived in cliff dwellings, still inhabit Arizona and New Mexico. Put Spaniards in Texas and Florida, and French in the intervening states. Now imagine the rest of the southern states to be inhabited by various tribes of negroes still speaking the languages of Africa and worshiping African fetishes. Lastly let Pennsylvania be inhabited by Poles and Russians, New York by Dutch, New England and the Mississippi Valley by English, and the mountainous parts of the country by strong tribes of savage

Indians. Suppose that each of these races kept apart by itself; then the United States would be somewhat like India.

The Religions of India: The Hindus. In America we can rarely judge of a man's religion by his dress. Most of us are Christians, either Protestant or Catholic, and a few are Jews; but that makes very little difference in the ordinary business of life. If we go into a store or a restaurant in the city, we have no idea whether the clerks and waiters are of one religion or another. We do not care much, provided we get what we want. In India it is very different. A person who has lived there long will look at a man and say, "That is a Hindu of the goldsmiths' caste. I know him by the marks that are painted on his forehead." Of another he will say, "See that Parsi, with his black cap like a miter!" or, "There goes a Brahman; see his brass bowl! Among the Hindus he is a very holy man. If that goldsmith should touch his food, the Brahman would throw it away because he would consider it unclean. That naked low-caste man over there, with nothing but a cloth around his loins, dare not come within twenty feet of the holy man."

Everywhere in India religion is extremely important. It regulates how a man shall eat and drink and sleep. It decides what his business shall be. For the system of caste compels a son to do exactly the same sort of work that his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather did before him. But strangely enough, religion has very little to do with the way a man acts, as to what is right and wrong. A Hindu believes that he can commit all sorts of sins and still be a very good man. He needs only to bathe in the Ganges River, or become a beggar and perhaps keep his arm stretched out stiff

for year after year, and all his sins will be forgiven. Two-thirds of all the people of India are Hindus, who



Hindu temple at the sanctuary of Wai, Bombay

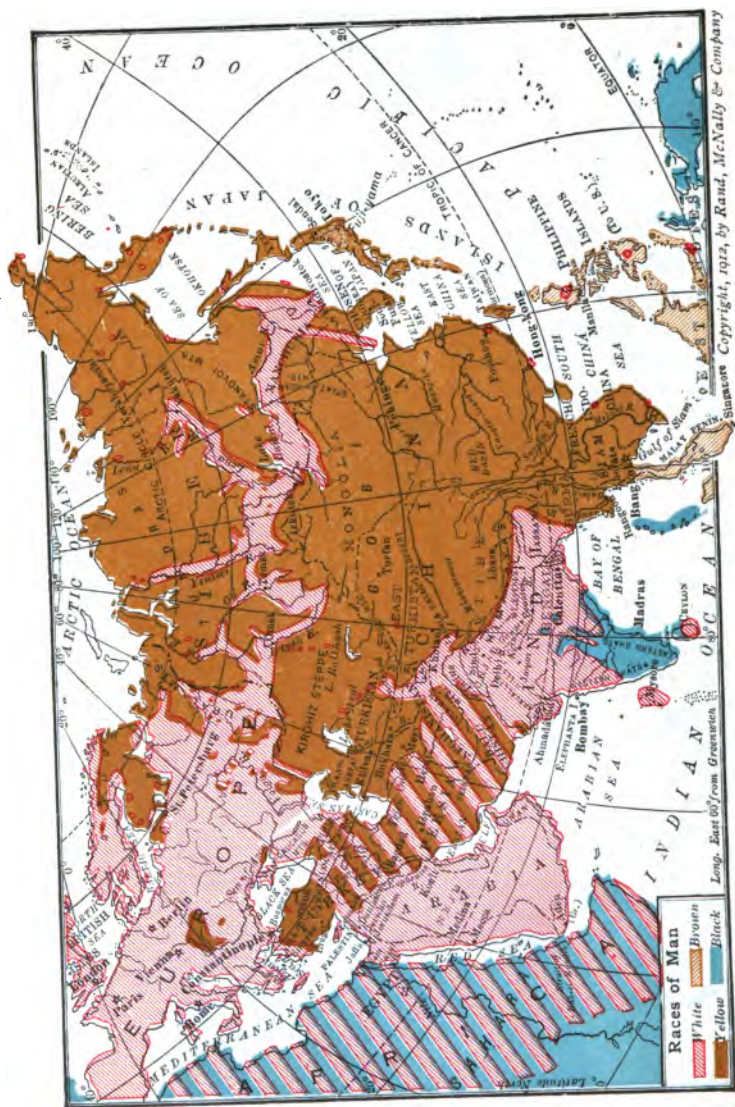
worship idols and think that cows and oxen are holy. They are divided into hundreds of castes, among which the Brahmans are the most holy. We shall see more of the Hindus later.

Mohammedans, Buddhists, and Animists. Among the people of India who are not Hindus about sixty million are Mohammedans, who pray with their faces toward Mecca and swear by the beard of Mohammed. The King of England, who is also the Emperor of India, has twice as many Mohammedan subjects as has the Sultan of Turkey. The remainder of the people of India profess various religions. Some are mild Buddhists like the Chinese and Burmese. Others, called Animists, are mere savages who believe that every rock, tree, river, and hill is the home of a spirit. If the spirits become angry, they are supposed to bring sickness or accident

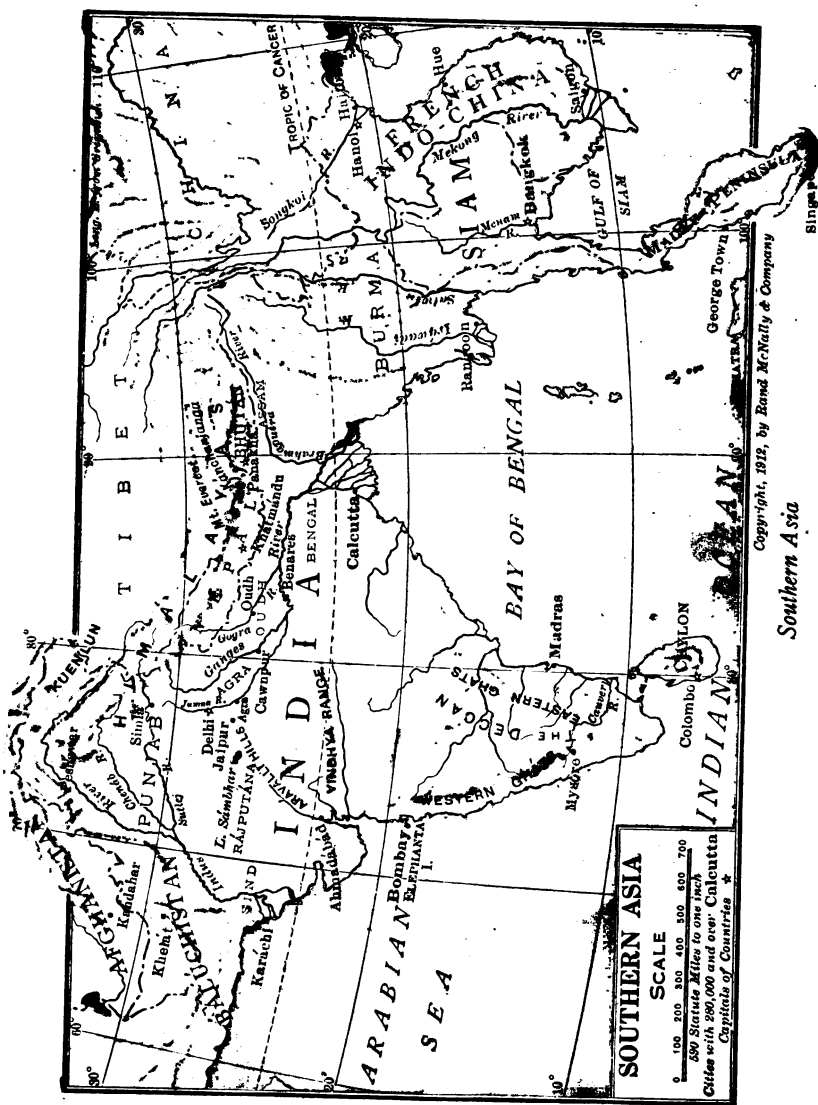
or death upon the people who wrong them. When a savage wants to dig a hole in the ground or to make a little clearing in the dense forest, he sets out a small bowl of rice or of palm wine for the spirits of the place. The poor ignorant man thinks that the supposed spirits are like men and that they will be so pleased with the offering that they will not object to having their homes disturbed.

The Sikhs. One of the most interesting religions in India is that of the Sikhs—a strong, sturdy people from the foothills of the Himálayas. They revere the holy Brahman caste of the Hindus but do not worship idols. Their religious services are much like those of Protestants. They meet in temples which are free from images and pictures. There they sing hymns, pray, read from the “Granth”—their holy book,—and listen sometimes to preaching. The Sikhs are soldiers by profession and have been so for hundreds of years. Many serve in the part of the British army which is composed of natives of India. Others become policemen and watchmen in all the British possessions from Hong-kong to Aden. They will do no other work, for although not Hindus they are bound by caste, and sons must follow the profession of their fathers.

The Jains: Indian Art. The Jains, who have been called the Quakers of India, have a religion which resembles Hinduism, but is free from most of the worst practices of that faith. Like all Hindus, the Jains believe that the souls of animals pass into men. Therefore, they will not kill any living creature, not even a fly or a mosquito. They actually have hospitals for animals. For instance at Ahmadábád, north of Bombay, their hospital contains eight hundred old or sick animals which are fed as long as they live. In the streets of



Races of man



towns and in the country the Jains set up little bird houses on poles and place bird food in them daily, all as part of their religion. The Jains live in many parts of India but chiefly in Rájputána. They are largely merchants and they are often very rich. One of the things in which they deal is expensive cloth, some of which is made of silver and gold thread. An Indian jeweler, with only the clumsiest tools, can sit in his tiny box of a shop and, taking a silver dollar, draw it out so thin that it makes a mile of fine, soft thread. Some of the cloth made of gold and silver is worth a thousand or even five thousand dollars a yard. It is not worn by women, as one would expect, but by men, the native princes of India. The women in most parts of the country are kept in seclusion and are obliged to veil their faces in public.

The Parsis. Though the Jains are good merchants, they are excelled by the Parsis of Bombay, who belong to quite a different race and religion. Parsi is the same word as Persian. Long ago the ancestors of the Parsis were so persecuted by the Mohammedans of Persia that they left their own country and came to India. They carefully brought with them the sacred fire which they worship. It is never allowed to go out. In the morning on the seashore at Bombay one often sees Parsis bowing down in worship to the rising sun, the source of all life, as they think. To them the earth is holy, so the bodies of the dead cannot be buried in it. Fire too is holy, so bodies cannot be burned, as is the custom of the Hindus. Therefore, in the famous white Towers of Silence at Bombay the Parsis expose the bodies of their dead in the open air for ugly birds called vultures to devour. Aside from the British, the Parsis are the most progressive people in India. Most of the

racés of India are immigrants who have come to the country at various times from the north or west. Among the last of the immigrants were the famous Moguls from central Asia, who came as conquerors, founded a great kingdom, and built wonderful palaces and mosques. Other races, like the Parsis, came as exiles; and the latest great invaders, the British, came as merchants.

Causes of the Diversity of India. India is a land of contrasts. We have seen how the inhabitants of the country vary in race, language, and religion. They vary equally in habits. The variations are due chiefly to two great causes. In the first place, unnumbered tribes and races have invaded India, bringing with them their own habits. In the second place, the mountains, plains, climate, plants, and animals of India vary greatly from place to place. Because of this, people are bound to live in very different ways in different parts of the country. Until the English introduced railroads, it was hard to travel from one part of India to another, harder even than in many other parts of Asia. There were rivers and mountains to cross, and jungles full of savage tigers and deadly snakes to be traversed. Each race was under its own government, which was very suspicious of strangers; and every Hindu traveler was much afraid that he would do something which would defile him and make him lose his caste. Naturally, then, the people of the various parts of India have had little to do with one another and are very diverse. Let us see how great the contrasts are.

The Contrast between Sind and Bengal. On the map of India it appears at first sight as if the provinces called Sind and Bengal ought to be much alike. Sind is a great plain lying in the west of India along the lower course of the Indus River, a little north of the Tropic of

Cancer. Bengal is a similar plain lying in the east of India along the lower courses of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers, partly north and partly south of the Tropic of Cancer. When we look closely at a large map, we begin to notice differences. Bengal is crisscrossed with railroads, while Sind has very few. Many lines of steamboats are marked as coming to Calcutta in Bengal, and only one or two as coming to Karáchi in Sind. Calcutta was long the capital of India and is still one of the largest cities in the world, while Karáchi is a new city, the location of which is actually unknown to many intelligent people. Another noticeable fact is that on a large map the country of Bengal is covered with the names of towns and cities, while in Sind the names are few and unimportant. When we inquire, we are told that Bengal has about five hundred fifty inhabitants for every square mile, while Sind has only sixty-eight. Scores of books contain descriptions of Bengal and its clever, cowardly people, short, well-fed, and plump. Only a few have anything to say about the tall, warlike people of Sind.

Description of Bengal. In Bengal the plain is broad and green. Fertile rice fields are fringed with an ever-green border of bamboo, and cocoanut, areca, and other palms. Here and there a single huge banyan, or sacred fig tree, looks like a small grove festooned with great creeping vines full of gorgeous flowers. The roads swarm with swarthy people, scantily dressed in dirty sheets of white cotton wound gracefully around their smooth bodies. Occasionally a wealthy landowner is seen riding pompously in a springless two-wheeled cart drawn by one horse. His head is covered by a snow-white turban banded with gold. Earrings of pearl and gold hang from his olive ears, and around his neck

a chain of amethysts and emeralds rests on a robe of rose-colored satin. In contrast to this magnificence it is most surprising to see that his lower garment is a pair of cheap, frayed pajamas of white cotton; his legs below the knee are bare; and his feet are stuck into old carpet slippers. Such contrasts of beauty and shabbiness are common in India.

At first sight one wonders where the people live, for not a farmhouse is in sight. It is evident that the population is dense, for moist, green rice fields stretch as far as the eye can see. In some fields the grain is tall and in others short, for there are many kinds of rice, and we are told that three hundred varieties are raised in the province. Soon the road approaches a clump of palms and bamboos, and as we draw near we see that the trees conceal a village. Little mud houses with conical roofs of thatch stand crowded close together, looking like beehives. Ponds, or "tanks," of green stagnant water fill hollows where mud has been dug up for the houses. The village itself stands on a little elevation, for in the rainy season the waters of the Ganges and Brahmaputra sometimes flood the country for miles and miles. Beside the quaint village flows a small branch of the river. It is covered with boats which sail up and down, carrying vegetables and grain for Calcutta and the other cities.

Like bees the brown-skinned, cheerful people swarm in the village streets. In one part of the village people can be seen threshing rice by driving oxen around upon it. Others are throwing the broken, threshed straw up into the wind to winnow out the grain. Women in sheds are husking the rice by working a beam which rises and falls, pounding the kernels. In other sheds oxen are walking round and round, turning a stone mill which presses linseed oil from the seed of flax. Another

mill, perhaps standing out of doors, is pressing out the juice of the sugar cane, which is put into large pans and boiled down to sugar. The people are very poor, but they seem happy and contented. Wherever one goes he finds the Bengalis, as the inhabitants are called, talking constantly; and their talk is ever of money and the price of rice and butter.

Description of Sind. Far away on the other side of India, in Sind, the scene is very different. The hot air, heavy with dusty haze, shimmers over a plain of yellow sand. In many places great dunes rise to a height of from fifty to one hundred feet. Inch by inch they are driven forward by strong winds from the west. The traveler by train shuts all the windows to keep out the dust. The traveler on horseback or by camel longs for the night, when the glare of the sun will give place to the beautiful evening tints of pink, yellow, and brown, and when he and his weary animals can rest in an oasis watered by the great Indus.

There in the oasis all is life and activity. The tall men of Sind, in their voluminous headdresses, are busy watering fields of rice and wheat or thrifty orchards of figs and other luscious fruits. The roads are dusty and so are the trees, but there are many signs of prosperity. Yet, through it all one sees that the people are very poor. The majority have enough to eat and that is all. They talk of the famine which came last year and bless the English for having built canals, which now bring abundant water to every man's fields. They wonder, too, how the Baluchis are getting on and whether they will be peaceable if the crops are bad. All the grown men remember the old days when they used to fight with plundering neighbors. They still have the spirit of soldiers, and one of them is worth half a dozen Bengalis

in a time of danger, although the Bengali is vastly cleverer than they when it comes to talking or studying.

The Monsoon Rains. The difference between Bengal and Sind is much greater than that between Florida and New Mexico. It is as great as that between Italy and the desert of northern Africa. In Sind the rainfall amounts to only about four inches in a year. How small this amount is may be judged from the fact that in a single month most parts of the eastern United States receive a greater quantity. Without irrigation the country is as dry and barren as the Sahara. With irrigation it becomes as fertile as Egypt. Bengal on the contrary is very rainy. In India, as in Eastern Asia, the rain depends almost wholly on the monsoon winds which blow from the northeast in winter and from the southwest in summer. The northeast winds blow across the Bay of Bengal and, rising gently over the low irregular range of the Eastern Gháts, shed rain in the eastern part of the Indian Peninsula and in Ceylon in winter. The remainder of the country is then quite dry, although a little rain falls in Bengal and it storms occasionally in the north.

In summer when the winds blow from the southwest, almost all parts of India receive some rain. On the western shore, from Bombay southward, the Western Gháts cause the air to rise so rapidly that very heavy rains fall. A little farther east, beyond the crest of the Gháts, the rainfall is much less. In ordinary years, however, it is enough for crops. In the southern part of the peninsula, in the neighborhood of Madras and Mysore, rain falls more or less at all times of the year, since both monsoons come from the ocean. North of Bombay on the west coast the rainfall diminishes, because the southwest winds are less regular and because the height of the mountains diminishes. In Sind the country is so low

and flat that the air of the monsoons is scarcely obliged to rise at all in passing over it. As the land is usually warmer than the ocean, there is nothing to cool the air. Hence almost no rain falls in Sind. Where there are mountains, for example the Arávali Hills to the east and the Vindhya Range to the southeast, there is enough rain to make it possible to raise crops without irrigation. Farther north in the Punjab and in all the region from the upper Indus to Bengal, the Indo-Gangetic Plain lies at the base of the Himálayas. It therefore receives a fairly large rainfall, which makes it possible for northern India to support a vast population. In Bengal the rains are still heavier than in the region to the northwest, because the eastern Himálayas are not far from the sea.

Assam, in the valley of the Brahmaputra at the base of the Himálayas northeast of Bengal, is the rainiest place in the world. In a single year nearly 500 inches of rain often falls. That is, if none of the rain ran off from the place where it fell and none were lost by evaporation, the water would be more than forty feet deep at the end of the year. In a single day forty or fifty inches have been known to fall. In other words this part of Assam sometimes receives as much rain in one day as the eastern United States receives in a year. The drier parts of the United States, such as Arizona, do not receive as much rain in five years as Assam does in twenty-four hours. Naturally, Assam abounds in great streams, that land possessing large rivers where we possess mere creeks. Because of the heavy downpour of water the soil is washed away completely from all parts of the mountains where the slope is at all steep, and nothing but bare rock remains. Elsewhere the forest grows most luxuriantly. Those who have been in this region in the rainy season

say that the climate is not so disagreeable as might be expected, for the mornings are generally sunny, so that clothes and houses have a chance to dry.

The moisture of the southern part of Bengal, around Calcutta, is much more trying than that of Assam. There, the air is hot and muggy all the time in summer. Clothes that are put in a closet mold in two or three days. Foreigners who stay through the summer have special servants who take out all the clothes every day and air them. Otherwise everything would be spoiled. In winter Calcutta is decidedly warm, but the temperature is no higher than that which prevails in most parts of America in summer. In summer Calcutta is not much warmer than in winter, but the climate is so damp as to be almost unendurable. There, and in most parts of India except the mountains and the far north, Europeans are quite sure to grow ill if they remain year after year. English children, after they are five or six years old, have to be sent home to England, or else they grow pale and thin.

The Three Great Divisions of India. Sind and Bengal do not represent the greatest contrast that may be found in India. These two regions differ primarily in climate alone, although this of course gives rise to other differences. Other places differ not only in climate but in the height of the land above the sea, the extent to which it has been cut up into mountains and valleys, the distance from the sea, the nature of the soil and minerals, and the presence or absence of easy routes of travel.

India is naturally divided into three main divisions. On the north lie the great mountains extending north-eastward from southern Balúchistán to the Pamirs and then southeastward along the line of the Himálayas

to the Burmese ranges. This vast barrier protects India from invasion by the people of the east and



Traveling in the Deccan

north and from the cold winds of central Asia. It also furnishes life to the country at its base.

Without the mountains the second great division of the country would be almost waterless. From the mouth of the Indus, in Sind, a vast plain of the finest, most fertile soil extends up the Indus to the great province of the Punjab, or "land of the five rivers." It then follows the Ganges down through the rich and enormously populous provinces of Agra and Oudh to Bengal and Assam. In these great plains—the second main division of India—live twice as many people as in the United States. Except the plains of China no other large area of the earth's surface can compare with them in density of population.

The great peninsula extending from the Arávali Hills and Vindhya Range southward to Ceylon is

the third great division, and comprises the rest of India. In the north it consists of low mountains; in the center, of the low plateau known as the Deccan; and again in the south, of mountains. It contains a population as great as that of the United States, but the people have not much energy, and have done very little to make themselves important in the world.

The Himálayas. It is hard to realize the beauty and majesty of the Himálayas. At their foot lies a valley, the Terai, so warm and damp and low that it is almost uninhabitable. Dense jungles of bamboo and all manner of tropical trees form the haunt of strange beasts and birds and of a few poor ignorant savages. Yet even for the hunter the Terai is not a good place. It is too full of mosquitoes and other stinging creatures, and its climate is such that fevers are prevalent. Snakes are very numerous, and the danger of death is always present. As long as the mountains pour down their floods and the tropical sun beats hot, the Terai can scarcely become the home of civilized man.

Beyond the Terai the mountains begin to rise. At first they are covered with tropical trees. Monkeys swing in the tree tops, and white ants eat houses and every other sort of dead wood. A little higher the scenery changes. The plants of the Temperate Zone begin to make their appearance, and tea plantations cover the fair slopes. The European begins to revive in the fresh air, which feels to him far better than the coolest evening breeze feels to us after a hot day. Higher yet, evergreens, like the pine and cedar, cover the slopes, and the deodar with cones like brown Christmas candles appears. Here at last is a country in which the white man can live. There is not much of it, however. Quickly the mountains tower higher; bare rocks replace forests; and

high above the rugged slopes cold mountain peaks gleam with snow which never melts. Even in summer the thermometer goes down to zero on the higher ranges. Here stands Everest, the highest of mountains, great Káchan-jangá, and a score of others more than five miles high.

Traveling in these mountains is not an easy matter. No horse can climb to the lofty passes through the deep snow. Yaks, perhaps, can be used—great, clumsy-looking beasts like oxen, with long shaggy hair coming down to their knees. Slowly and carefully they feel among the stones, or in the snow on the steep slopes, to find a foothold for their long, double-pointed hoofs; then, having placed their feet, they clamber upward, never hurrying and always safe. As they climb, they grunt like huge pigs and grind their teeth most unpleasantly.



A valley among the high steep slopes of the Himdlayas

Some of the passes are too difficult even for yaks; only men can climb them. The traveler must hire



Transportation in the Himalayas

coolies who put loads of food, beds, tents, and everything that will be needed for weeks, upon their backs. Each man is supposed to carry sixty pounds, which is no easy matter. In the high mountains far above the clouds one's heart beats like the blows of a hammer, shaking the whole body. A walk of a hundred yards up a very gentle slope makes one feel as if he had run a hard race. Every few minutes the climber must sit down for a rest. Often the rarity of the air is such that the pressure of the blood in the body bursts some thin membrane, and people bleed at the ears and nose.

As the mountaineer wends his way over the snow on a sunny day after a storm, a roar like distant thunder strikes his ear. It grows louder, the coolies point upward and, throwing off their loads, begin to run. Far up on the side of a glistening white peak something

is moving. It is an avalanche which every second grows in size. It is coming straight for the path where the caravan stands. The only thing to do is to run to one side where, perhaps, it will be possible to escape from being buried fifty feet deep under the rushing snow. The coolies and the travelers save themselves, but all the loads are lost, and it is necessary to go back and begin again.

One of the finest things in the Himálayas is the huge glaciers from five to thirty miles long. Like great white tongues they wind down the valleys, carrying with them thousands of tons of rock and gravel torn from the bottoms of the valleys and the sides of the mountains. From a distance they look smooth and soft. Close at hand they are seen to be broken into huge cracks large enough to engulf a hundred men. At the end of each glacier acres and acres are covered by a moraine, a great jumble of rocks of all shapes and sizes brought down by the ice. From each moraine a milky river springs forth, full fledged, from the melting snow of the glacier. The hotter the sun, the faster the ice and snow melt upon the mountains, and the larger the rivers. It is easy now to see the origin of the floods which descend to the plains and form the great rivers. India may well be grateful to the mountains which give rise to such rivers, for the water brings life to millions of acres of good land.

Mánasarowar, the Sacred Lake. North of the great Himálayas a slight descent brings the traveler to the lofty plateau of Tibet. Here lies the sacred lake of Mánasarowar, three miles above the sea. Every year hundreds of Hindu pilgrims laboriously cross the snowy passes to worship at this sacred spot. In their thin cotton garments they shiver and shake with cold. They are

lean, slender men well fitted to live in a hot country, but not in one like Tibet. They suffer terribly in places where the plump, fat Tibetans would be perfectly warm and comfortable. Yet in spite of the cold they bathe in the chill waters of the sacred lake, for such is the command of their unsatisfying religion.

The Debt of India to the Himálayas. It almost seems as if the pilgrims realized that the great mountains and the rivers which center there furnish life to India. Near Lake Mánasarowar four great rivers take their rise and cross the Himálayas into India. The Indus and its chief tributary, the Sutlej, flow to the west and southwest. The Brahmaputra and the Gogra, the principal tributaries of the Ganges, flow to the east and southeast. These streams and others from the southern side of the Himálayas have built up the entire great plain of northern India. They have carried away the rocks of the mountains and have deposited them in the form of the finest, richest soil, making a plain where one can travel two thousand miles, from the mouth of the Indus up to the Punjab and then down to the mouth of the Ganges, without being able to find a single pebble. Without the mountains there would be no plain of northern India. And without the rain and rivers, to which the mountains give rise, most of the plain would be a desert like Sind. In our thought of India the rugged snow-capped mountains with their clouds, rains, snows, and glaciers must always be connected with the smooth, warm plains with their abundant trees and plants and their swarms of dusky, busy, superstitious people.

The Indo-Gangetic Plain. We have seen something of the two ends of the Indo-Gangetic Plain: Sind, too dry and sterile to foster civilization, and Bengal, too

damp and muggy. Between the two and a little farther north lies the best part of India: the provinces of the Punjab, Agra, and Oudh. Here the great Indian nations of the past have had their centers, and here the civilization, industry, and wealth of the country center to-day.

From the low banks of the rivers the plains slope gently away, dotted with villages and adorned with noble trees. The houses of each village cluster thickly, and the brown masses of flat-roofed mud buildings look cool and clean in the purple shadows of the trees. Stretching from village to village across the length of the land runs the great white highway of the Sircar—the Road of the Viceroy, the people call it. Its long avenues of trees give



Bullock carts and their drivers in the Indo-Gangetic Plain

welcome shade to creaking bullock carts and to the white-robed, dust-covered figures of passing wayfarers.

Beyond the road and the villages the fields of the peasants stretch away to the level horizon. In the winter, which is cool and bracing but not cold, they are green with wheat and mustard. In the spring and early summer, when nature is at its best with us, they stretch away

bare and brown under the yellow haze of a cloudless sky. Day after day the merciless sun scorches the land with an intensity unknown in more northern countries, and all things long for rain. Then in June the southwest monsoons begin to blow and the rains come; the air grows cooler and damper, and the fields grow beautiful with crops of millet, sugar cane, corn, and poppies.

Famines. As the villagers gather to gossip under the trees in the cool of the evening, their talk, like that of the Bengalis, is of the prices of food in the nearest bazaar. Some sit on the steps around a sacred tank of dirty, greenish water in front of the Hindu temple. Others squat around the ugly figure of the kind god, Ganesa, daubed with vermilion paint. Their prayer is ever for rain. If the rains come at the right time and in the



Indian children rescued from famine, southern India

necessary quantities, they are safe. If not, millions may die. India, even more than China, is a land of famine.

In the old days the people used to die in hundreds whenever the rainfall was scanty. Those who did not die of hunger perished of pestilence and plague. Many wandered away to other parts of the country and gave themselves up to a life of stealing. Probably in this way certain small castes were formed whose business it is to steal. During the rainy season when the crops must be raised, they work peaceably at home. In the dry season they wander to far parts of the country on business, as they would call it. They do not think it wrong to steal. It is part of their religious duty. Their fathers did it, and they must do it or else be put out of their caste.

Railroads. During the last hundred years of English rule in India the ravages of famine have become much less than formerly. The government has many times fed hundreds of thousands of people who had not a morsel of bread of their own. It has given work to other hundreds of thousands. It has built railroads, so that food can be brought from one part of the country to another.

We scarcely realize how much we depend upon railroads. Suppose all the railroads leading to New York should be destroyed. Soon the people of the great city would begin to find it hard to get food. The price of everything would go up. A loaf of bread that had been five cents would be ten, then fifteen, and at last twenty, thirty, and fifty. Poor people would very soon not be able to buy enough to feed themselves and their families. The weaker children would grow sick, and finally hundreds and thousands of people would die.

In the old days India was like this. There might be more than enough food in Bengal, while in Agra whole villages would die of hunger because there was no way

of carrying the food to them. Now all this has been changed by the building of railroads by the English.

Irrigation. A still more important thing which the English have done is to build great canals to carry the water of the rivers to the fields. In regions watered by the canals the farmers no longer depend entirely on the rain. If the rain is late or scanty, they simply turn on some water from a canal and plant the seed, knowing that the crop will be good. Some of the canals are great rivers a hundred yards wide. Sometimes they are carried over other streams and sometimes under. In the Punjab great tracts which were formerly scrubby waste land, too dry for anything but pasture, now form some of the richest farms in the country.

When the Chenáb Canal was built, its water was carried to a region of this kind where nobody lived. British officials laid out towns and farms. They decided on sites for post offices, stores, roads, railroads, and everything which a community would need. Then when all was ready, the water was turned into the canals, and the whole river was carried to the new country. Poor people who had suffered from famine and distress in other places were allowed to buy the land very cheaply. In ten or twelve years a million people had settled on land which once was a desert. It was as if the state of Connecticut were all a desert with nobody living in it, and the government should spread the water of the Connecticut River over a large part of the state, and the whole state should be settled in a dozen years.

In spite of all that the English have done to improve conditions, famines still occur. People who are thrifty need not suffer from them now, but the unthrifty have nothing laid by to use in buying food when their crops are poor and prices are high. There are millions of such

people in India, and they will always suffer when the rains fail, for irrigation is not possible everywhere.

The people of India have gladly adopted some new things, such as railroads and irrigation canals which help to prevent famines, but they prefer to do most things in the old way. Many missionaries have tried to convert the Hindus and the people of other religions, but only a few hundred thousand have yet changed their faith. The remainder of the people, to the number of three hundred million, still believe in the old gods.

The Brahmins. The European traveler on the railroad is likely to be in a first-class car with windows well curtained to keep out the sun, berths in which to sleep, and a bathroom where he can frequently bathe or get a drink of ice water. The poor native travels in a third-class car, where people are crowded together like sheep in a pen. Even when the natives are not compelled to be so crowded, they seem to like it.

At almost every station scores of people come out of the cars for a drink of water. On the platform stand ragged, dirty men carrying sheepskin bags of water on their backs and brass bowls wrapped in the girdles around their waists. The thirsty crowd swarms around them, but does not touch them. To one man the water carrier hands a little bowl of water. The next does not seem to expect a bowl. He holds his hands together like a cup, close to his face, and the water carrier pours water into them, while the thirsty passenger eagerly drinks. It seems a queer way to do, until one understands the caste system of the Hindus. The water carrier is a Brahman, a member of the highest of all castes. The man to whom he gave a bowl is also a Brahman; the other is a member of a lower caste, whose touch would defile the Brahman's bowl and oblige him to throw it away.

Brahmans cannot eat food which persons of a lower caste have touched or drink water from a well or dish which has been used by other castes.

A Brahman may be the most dirty, wretched, and wicked of men, but he is holy, and all men revere him and give him presents and ask him to pray for them—simply because his ancestors happen to have belonged to what was once the caste of priests. If a Brahman eats and drinks with people of a lower caste, he is supposed to be defiled. He loses his holy character and becomes an outcast. Thenceforth, unless he has plenty of money to buy forgiveness, he is not a member of any caste and is despised and illtreated by everyone.

Caste. Every Hindu belongs to one particular caste, with its own customs and its own particular occupation. A man can always take food from a person of a higher caste, but not from one of a lower. All persons must marry within their own caste. The grocers form one caste, the druggists another, the shoemakers a third, and so on. If Mr. Grocer travels, he takes food with him; for he may be obliged to go to a village of tanners, whom he would consider unclean. He could not stay in the village long, for he would be almost sure to defile himself in some way. Of course if there were a Brahman there, he might get the holy man to cook for him, and this would enable him to escape pollution. If Mr. Grocer's son wants to become a dry-goods clerk, all his friends and neighbors hold up their hands in horror, and say: "The young man is an infidel. The gods will punish those who act so wickedly!"

Marriage. If the young man settles down and becomes a good grocer, we might think that he would have trouble again because he would want to marry the druggist's pretty daughter. Not a bit of it. When he

was ten years old, he was betrothed by his parents to another grocer's little girl of six. They were married when she was twelve and he was sixteen. Since then she has led a stupid life of hard work. She does not mind the washing and cooking and sewing and the care of the children. The hard part of life for a Hindu woman is that she is always shut up and can never go around freely as men do. Her ears are hung with heavy earrings. There is a



A native doctor and his daughter

great silver button fastened into the left side of her brown nose, and her bare round arms and legs are loaded with beautiful rings of gold and silver, delicately carved and set with precious stones. Around her waist is a broad girdle of silver hung with coins and bangles. As she walks her load of jewelry tinkles musically. Her husband must be very fond of her to give her all those expensive ornaments, one thinks. Perhaps he is fond of her, but that is not why he bought the ornaments. He has done well in business and has some money to invest. There are no native savings banks in India and few good places to invest money. The best thing to do with his savings, he thinks, is to buy jewelry;

and the safest place to keep the jewelry is on his wife or himself. Sometimes one sees a coolie laborer wearing nothing but a little loin cloth and a splendid silver girdle encircling his naked body. He has saved something for the day of famine.

Oftentimes girls in India are given in marriage when they are scarcely more than babies. Their husbands may be many, many years older than they, and may die before the child wives grow up. Such little widows have the saddest lives that can be imagined. According to Hindu law they cannot be married again. If they stay in the houses of their dead husbands, every one abuses them. They cannot go out and earn a living by teaching school or working in a store or office or factory. Women do not do those things in India, except in a few large cities like Cawnpur and Bombay, where large factories have lately been established. So hundreds of thousands of them lead lives of utter misery. It is not good to be a girl in India.

Religious Festivals: The Rites of Hinduism. The happiest times for Hindus, and especially for the women, are the great religious festivals. Every year hundreds of thousands of men and women make pilgrimages to Benares or some other sacred place. At Benares a great city is almost entirely given up to temples and pilgrims. The most important temples are along the banks of the Ganges. In one temple stands the ugly figure of the monkey god, and in the trees round about hundreds of grinning monkeys quarrel and scold or drop down to snatch some good thing from the worshiper's hands.

In the market place piles of fruit and vegetables are spread out for sale. Among the crowds of eager pilgrims a great bull is seen walking quietly along till he comes to some fresh cabbages and stops to take a few bites. No one

seems to pay any attention to him. Although the shopkeeper certainly sees him, he makes no attempt to drive



A Hindu temple

him away. Soon the bull goes on to another shop and eats a little rice. Then another bull is seen with his nose in a basket of figs. The bulls are holy animals. Their homes are in the temples where the Hindus worship them. The shopkeeper whose figs were eaten feels grateful because he has won credit for himself in heaven, so he believes, by giving something to the holy animal in which is the spirit of some saint. Everywhere among Hindus oxen and cows are revered. The milk of cows is used, but the flesh is never eaten and the animals are never killed. This is partly because cattle are so very necessary to plow the fields, and there is not room to keep many of them where there are so many people. It is also partly because in a warm country like India people do not feel the need of meat. Usually they prefer millet, rice, wheat, vegetables, and fruit with sugar and oil,

Along the Ganges River at Benares strange sights are seen. On either side broad flights of steps lead from the water's edge to tawdry temples topped with silver domes. In one place sits a man with his body smeared with oil and ashes. His left hand is raised to the back of his head, and he never moves it. For years he has kept it in that one position, until now he could not move it if he would. By his side is a little brass bowl into which a pilgrim now and then drops a little coin. The man is a Brahman fakir, who pretends to be very holy and who really believes that the gods are pleased to have him spend his life in doing nothing but beg.

Near at hand squats a fakir of another kind, a conjurer. From the scanty rags which cover his nakedness he pulls out a snake of the most poisonous kind and wraps it around his neck. We think that its fangs have been removed, but that is not true. It could kill a man if it wished, but the fakir somehow knows how to keep it quiet. Putting the snake into a covered basket, he proceeds to astonish a crowd of pilgrims. In his hand he takes a seed and plants it in the ground. In a few minutes a little shoot appears; then a green leaf unrolls. The plant grows before our eyes, inch by inch. Soon it is a little tree, and on it appears a blossom, and at last a fruit which the fakir takes off and hands to a pilgrim. It is a fig. How the fakir works his tricks no one knows. People have tried again and again to find out the secrets of the Hindu jugglers, but without success. Perhaps the fakir merely causes people to think that they see the things which he wants them to see.

Brahmans and fakirs are not the only interesting people on the river bank. Here come half a dozen men, stumbling hastily along with an old man in their arms. He is evidently very sick, for he groans piteously. It

hurts him to be carried, and yet he urges his bearers to hasten. They carry him to the water's edge and lay him down with his feet in the stream. As his feet touch the water, a happy look comes over his face. He is dying, and, like all Hindus, he believes that if he can die with his feet in the sacred waters of the Ganges his soul will secure millions of years of happiness.

Near him the body of a man who died far away is being washed in the sacred river. He could not come to die by the riverside, but his friends have brought his body. When it is washed, it is wrapped in a white cloth and carried to a pile of wood, on the top of which it is carefully placed. A group of Brahmans stand around and recite prayers. One brings a torch and sets fire to the pile, which burns until the body is consumed. Then the ashes are thrown into the river, and a new pile of wood is prepared for the next body. The Hindus have the sensible practice of burning the bodies of the dead. They do many things which are very unsanitary, but this particular custom is wise.

The thing that impresses one most in Benares is the great throng of bathers. Crowds of men in one place and of women in another, not far off, stand in the water daily. They throw it over their shoulders and drink it till they can drink no more. Bottles are filled with the holy fluid to be carried far away to bring blessings to friends at home. No one cares if a dead body is being washed just above him or if cattle are wallowing in the dirty, muddy stream. It is the Ganges, and to every true Hindu the water of the Ganges is precious, no matter how dirty it may be.

Mohammedan Buildings: The Taj Mahal. The Mohammedans, unlike the Hindus, possess few holy places in India. Certain cities, however, such as Delhi and

Agra, fill them with the utmost pride. Three or four hundred years ago India was conquered and ruled by some Mohammedan emperors called the Moguls, a race of Tartars from Turkistan, who came down through Afghanistan. They built some of the most splendid palaces and mosques in the world. Best of all their works is the Taj Mahal at Agra. The emperor, Shah Jehan, grieving greatly over the death of his wife, Arjmand Bānū Begam, decided to build for her a tomb more beautiful than any ever before seen. From various parts of Asia and even from Europe he procured artists. For twenty-two years, so it is said, he kept twenty thousand men at work without pay on his wife's memorial. For the materials he paid the huge sum of twenty million dollars. No tomb ever cost so much, and none was ever so well worth building. There it stands to-day in the



The Taj Mahal at Agra

midst of beautiful gardens. It is not a tomb in the ordinary sense of the word, but a large domed building, two hundred fifty feet high, with slender spires on each of the four corners.

From top to bottom it is made of pure white marble; not a particle of iron or wood is used, nothing but mortar and stone. Everywhere the marble is inlaid with precious stones in the form of flowers, leaves, and branches. Here is a purple flower like an aster, there a red rose or a delicate green leaf. Each is fashioned with infinite care, so that every little petal and even the stamens are carefully worked out in bits of inlaid stone of the right shade or color. On the outside the figures are large and comparatively coarse, so that they appear well from a distance. On the inside they are smaller.

The most delicate work has been bestowed upon two sarcophagi, or caskets of white marble, which are supposed to contain the bodies of Shah Jehan and his wife. They stand within a wonderful screen of the purest white stone. The blending of delicate colors in the hard, cold stone of the sarcophagi seems to be the very perfection of human work.

Yet it is not they, nor the beautiful marble screen, which most impresses the visitor. The chief wonder of the Taj Mahal is the stately white building itself. It cannot be described. No one who has seen it can ever forget the graceful beauty of its fair white walls and perfectly proportioned domes.

The Indian Peninsula: Rájputána. South of the great plains the low mountains of the peninsula of India begin. Half among the low Arávalli Hills and half in the desert plain north of Sind lies Rájputána. It is a dry land where a slight failure of the monsoon rains brings

famine. Yet the people are prosperous. The air is clear and sweet and invigorating. The heat of summer is great but is not enervating like that of Bengal, and the winters are fairly cool. The climate is like that of Palestine or of the best parts of Arabia. In such a land, as might be expected, the inhabitants are vigorous and progressive compared with those of many other parts of the country. No race in India has more reason to be proud than have the Rájputs, as the ruling race of Rájputána is called. Next to the Brahmans they are the highest caste in India. They take great pride in boasting that they are descended from the sun, while the Brahmans are descended from the moon.

One of the characteristic cities of Rájputána is Jaipur, a spot of verdant cultivation set in the midst of sandy wastes and barren hills. Not far away lies the salt lake of Sámbar, white-edged with salt efflorescence and rose-tinted with pink crystals. Around its shores sweeping lines of pink and white flamingos move in ordered companies against the clear blue sky. Pink is a favorite color. In the city of Jaipur, itself, the houses are "pink-washed" instead of being "white-washed," because the materials used for making the wash contain something pink. The houses are very pretty from a distance, but close at hand they are tawdry. Each has its little portico, and the broad, sunny streets are lined with shady arcades. Everything is gaudy in Jaipur. The pink walls of the houses are often painted with animals in bright colors and the people, those who do not go half-naked, wear gowns of brilliant red, yellow, or green. In the streets the creaking bullock carts are gaily painted; camels and horses have bright trappings; and the trunks and foreheads of elephants are often painted in colored patterns. In a

moist land like Bengal such decorations would soon be spoiled, but in dry Rájputána they long remain brilliant.

Bombay. After Calcutta Bombay is the greatest city of India. The foreigner finds it most interesting, with its splendid harbor, its great trade, its many races, and its strange sights. It is here the majority of foreigners first enter India, and in its streets they can see examples of many of the most remarkable things in the country. Along the shore a magnificent boulevard leads past the splendid buildings which the British have erected during the last fifty or sixty years. Elsewhere sacred bulls are wreathed with flowers by girls devoted to the service of the gods. On the island of Elephanta, a few miles from the city, ancient temples and statues carved in the solid rock show that long ago the people of India were highly accomplished.



*Buddhist cave temples that have
been carved in rock*

Madras and the Far South. Farther south, on the east coast, the city of Madras spreads itself abroad like a series of large villages. Here is the land of palm trees. Here, too, the people seem really to belong to the Hot Belt. Most of them are Telugus and Tamils, dark, graceful people, dressed in bright cotton sheets thrown

carelessly over the shoulder and around the body. They belong to races which lived in India ages before the Rájputs and the Brahmans came to the country. Large ruins show that at some time the people of southern India had more energy than they now have. Yet even here some places are quite progressive; for instance, Mysore with its gold mines and its great electrical works at the falls of the Cauvery River.

The Aborigines. The peninsula of India contains many regions where the people are still savages. When one race after another came into the country from the north, the tribes that were conquered retired into the mountains. To-day their descendants still live there, knowing nothing of the changes that have taken place in the world. Around them on all sides lies dense jungle, through which it is hard to pass. The white man who tries to come among them is stricken with fever. So these primitive races live on in their mountain homes, hunting wild animals with bows and arrows and spears. They make offerings to the spirits of the woods, and burn little patches of jungle in order to plant millet and sugar cane for a few years until new jungle springs up.

Wild Animals. Here, as in Siam, the natives are much afraid of wild animals, especially tigers. When a tiger is young and its claws are sharp and its legs are strong for running, it usually runs away from men; for it can catch less dangerous prey. When it grows old, however, and finds it harder to catch the swift, wild animals of the jungle, it begins to catch men, who do not run away so fast. Commonly, tigers do not attack grown men unless they are asleep. The crafty animals are far more likely to catch children. When a tiger once begins to eat human beings, he seems to grow fond of them and hangs around a village, killing person after

person. One tiger is known to have killed one hundred four people in three years, and another, in a somewhat longer time, killed more than one hundred twenty-five. Usually the Hindu villagers do not kill wild animals, but they are glad enough to have a foreigner, with a good gun, come and shoot a man-eating tiger.

Snakes. Tigers are bad, but not nearly so bad as snakes, and no country has so many snakes as India. Some are small and harmless. Others, such as the hooded cobra, are deadly although small; and still others, like the python, are sometimes twenty-five feet long. Every year about twenty-five thousand people and one hundred thousand cattle are killed by snakes and wild animals, and of these about seven-eighths are killed by snakes. The government pays a dollar for every snake's skin that is brought in and five dollars for every tiger that is killed. Yet in spite of this, the people are slow to kill snakes. If a man is bitten by a snake and dies, his friends build a little shrine for him, and say that the gods were especially fond of that man and so sent a snake to kill him. It seems a queer way to account for it, but it is the way the Hindus have done for a thousand years, and therefore it seems to them sensible.

British Rule in India. Perhaps the strangest of all the strange things about India is the fact that it is ruled by England. Think of what it means. The people of the United Kingdom, including England, Scotland, and Ireland, number only about forty million. The people of India number seven or eight times as many, and yet they let the British rule them. In all India there are less than one hundred thousand English, or scarcely one Englishman for three thousand natives. Of the one hundred thousand English, only twelve hundred are government officials. These few Englishmen—one

only for every two hundred fifty thousand natives—rule the whole country; and the great majority of the people are contented to have them rule. To be sure, the English have allowed part of the work of the government to be carried on by natives of India, and some of the more enlightened Indians are vigorously demanding more power for themselves. Nevertheless, the English are still the real governors of the land. Suppose Japan were to rule all Europe. Suppose that she had an army of only sixty thousand Japanese, stationed mostly in Austria and the Balkan States. Besides this, let her have about one hundred forty thousand troops enlisted from among English, Germans, and Swiss and commanded by Japanese officers. That would make an army about one-third as large as that which Germany alone now has. How long could Japan rule Europe under such conditions? Yet, under precisely similar conditions, England has ruled India for more than a century.

The reason for this strange state of affairs is found in the geography of India and in the nature of the Indian and of the English people. As we have seen, India is not a single country. It is divided into a large number of countries inhabited by a great mixture of races. No native leader could ever make all these diverse peoples follow him. If England went away, the different races would soon begin to fight with one another. They do not know how to rule themselves. Some day, perhaps, they will learn; but that day seems to be far away.

Besides the divided character of India, another thing which makes it possible for the English to rule the country is the submissive character of the people. A large part of the farming classes, who compose

most of the population of India, do not care who rules them. They object if they are heavily taxed or are treated unjustly, but aside from that they have no thought of their rulers. India is so warm that the people have not much energy for matters outside their little round of daily work. They are satisfied if they can raise food enough to have a comfortable living, and can save a little to ward off famine or to pay the expenses of their daughters' weddings.

Another reason why English rule continues in India is that the native people of India believe that the English are absolutely honest. A merchant in India said to a traveler: "I have known you three days. I do not know much about your life, but if I had to trust all my property to some one, I would rather trust it to you than to my own brother. With us it is not the habit to be honest. You are an Englishman, and it is the habit of the English to be honest." It is English honesty and justice, most of all, which preserve the dominion of England in India. The people know that the English mean to do right. They also know that if their own people ruled them they would be oppressed far more than is now the case.

The work of England in India is not easy. For the sake of keeping her dominion over India and over its trade, England every year sends out many of her best young men as government officials or as officers in the army. In a way their life seems easy. They are surrounded by servants. Everybody who lives in the East has many servants. Each one costs very little, say from three to fifteen dollars a month; and each does very little work. If a man owns two horses, he must keep a servant to look after each horse. Another servant must be employed to buy all that is needed for

the house; another to cook; and still others for every sort of work. The man who is employed to take care of the horses is angry if he is asked to weed the garden. It is not his work, he says. It belongs to a man of some other caste. The foreigner in India cannot do all these things himself. In the first place he has not time; and in the second place he cannot stand it. For the first year or two, a European can work as hard in India as at home. Then a change comes, and he finds that he is tired all the time. His head aches, and perhaps he has a fever. The



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Simla, among the Himálayas, the summer capital of India

doctor tells him that he must get away to the "Hills," by which he means the mountains. Many a man goes to India and ruins his health while he is still comparatively young. India is not the place for white men.

The location of the capital of India is an interesting example of the effect of the climate on Europeans. Formerly the great city of Calcutta, at the mouth of the Ganges, was the capital, but when the King of England visited India in 1911 he announced that the capital would be changed to Delhi on the Jumna River, one of the main tributaries of the Ganges. Delhi is situated almost in the center of the great Indo-Gangetic Plain and is more easily reached from the country as a whole than is Calcutta. Also, it was the former capital of India in the days when the famous Mogul emperors came down from central Asia, three or four centuries ago, and established the most extensive empire that ever existed in the country before the coming of the English. Moreover, the people of the Punjab province, in which Delhi is located, are not so opposed to foreign rule as are those of Bengal, where Calcutta is situated. All these reasons bore a part in causing the British government to change the location of the capital, but the debilitating climate of Calcutta was more important than any of them. In summer Delhi is hotter than Calcutta but the climate is not so moist and enervating, and in winter it is quite cool and comfortable. Even Delhi, however, is not blessed with a summer climate that is healthful for Europeans. Accordingly, in the spring the government officials and thousands of other people move to Simla, high among the Himálayas, and there they stay until fall. Up at Simla a large number of government buildings have been erected, and all the work of the government goes on just as in the capital. Each of the great provinces

of India has its own "Hill Station," or summer place, in the mountains. Missionaries, merchants, soldiers, and all foreigners who can possibly do so, go to the mountains during the rainy season. It is very expensive, but less expensive than to be sick or to come home to America or Europe. Three hundred years ago the English first went to India, but still they are foreigners. And so they must always be. As the mountains give life to northern India by furnishing the soil for the great plains and by causing the warm rain to fall and the rivers to flow, so too the mountains furnish life to the English in India, and help to make it possible for England to continue her rule. Without the Himálayas, the greatest of mountains, the English would find it far harder than they now do to maintain the great Indian Empire as part of the still greater British Empire.

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